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THE M.D.'S DAUGHTER,

A NOVEL

OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY,

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

T. & W. BOONE, 29, NEW BOND STREET.

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THE M.D.'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER I.

Dr. Shafton belonged to a fine old English family in the county of Gloucester, whose eldest born had sat in the House of Commons, from a very remote and uninteresting period of history, till the Catholic and other emancipating bills rendered, in the eyes of the brother of our sketch, that privilege so unenviable, that he absolutely decided upon entering the army, as the more honourable calling. Why the member of the family with whom we have to deal became an M. D., is not very important to be enquired into; but how he came to rank in

the first class of the profession is a matter worthy of the highest interest; when we consider that there was nothing *outré* in either his person or manners, and that he carefully avoided 'fibbery and flattery.'

He married, early in life, a very beautiful and worthy woman, who, equally with himself, had formed the probably erroneous idea that happiness consists in pleasing the person that loves us best, and in making life pass as pleasantly at home, as it appears to pass in the world's eye.

It would be a moral and instructing task to relate the several ways by which these two people served to render themselves so indispensably necessary to each other: by mutual respect, founded upon the experience of each other's worth—mutual affection, kept alive by constant and unwearying obligations, and many other mutual blessings, the result of truth, piety, and the absence of cant. But if we presumed, in this philosophically fluctuating

age, to point out a path to happiness destitute of "metaphysical mud," our work would be likely to remain in manuscript for another generation.

In the full career of fame and fortune our worthy Doctor experienced the greatest of all earthly trials, in the death of this excellent and priceless wife. Consumption, arising from a neglected cold, notwithstanding the skill and care exerted against it, baffled all human agency, and left him a cheerless and miserable man. One child, the only pledge of their short union, remained to him; but, too young to understand his grief, or to mourn for her best friend, she could not, at present, soothe one pang of his affliction.

On her death-bed, Mrs. Shafton requested that Grace, until the age of twenty, might be brought up in entire seclusion; and that she should be allowed neither to marry nor to form any matrimonial engagement, until that period had elapsed.

"Were I," she said, "likely to live, you, dear friend, would laugh at my request, for I own it is dictated by a superstition; but, even should your judgment deem it trivial and unnecessary, do not refuse to promise me. Will you promise?"

Dr. Shafton did not hesitate to accede to her request, but begged to be acquainted with its motive. She replied, "to you, my husband, it would be no motive; but, surely, twenty is quite early enough for a girl to assume the duties of wife; and I shall die more happy for being assured that you will, in every respect, fulfil this promise."

The Doctor pressed her hand in confirmation of his already given word, and the subject was dropped. He was too much overpowered with sorrow for the loss that pended over him to think of anything else, and particularly of a matter, which, at the time, he looked upon as perfectly unimportant.

Mrs. Shafton did not survive this conversation many days; and her husband had need of that true Christian fortitude, which he possessed in so high a degree, to enable him to support his loss. Then, every wish she had expressed became a law; he felt as though, by compliance he were again contributing to her happiness: as though, in attending to her slightest desire, she still could perceive and smile upon him, with that sweet smile which had so often rewarded his endeavours.

The metropolis became odious to him: he determined to give up his profession, and seek some quiet retirement where he might devote himself to the education of his child; and, at the same time, comply with the request of his beloved wife. His fortune was already ample, and, although many would have deemed it madness to give up so lucrative a profession, the Doctor, not being one of those who think that happiness consists in a multitude of riches, his

resolution was quickly taken. Just at this period, the death of his brother put him in possession of the family estate in Gloucestershire.

Meadlands was one of those fine old-fashioned places with which England abounds. Situated in a delightful part of the county, and surrounded by noble parks, the doctor could not have desired a more lovely spot. It was much more extensive than his previous fortune would have entitled him to select; but then, the encrease of wealth had brought with it an encreased power of doing good—a power the Doctor valued for its own sake—besides, that it placed his child in a situation which, as far as human foresight could penetrate, would ensure her happiness and tranquillity.

He soon took possession of his new abode, and devoted himself exclusively to his studies and to the care of the little Grace. He found it, at first, no easy matter to confine himself to the entire seclusion that an adherence to the

promise given to his wife required. His brother had latterly lived on intimate terms with the surrounding neighbours, who now flocked to pay their respects to the new proprietor. These calls he was, as a matter of form, obliged to return. In doing so, he took occasion to mention his love of retirement, and his resolution to live a life of seclusion. This was laughed at as merely a fancy that would soon pass away; and crowds of invitations poured in upon him. It was not until after repeated refusals, that it began to be understood that the proprietor of Meadlands (hitherto one of the most sociable houses in the neighbourhood) meant really to live the life of a recluse, and, thereby, to shut them from their former enjoyments. Then, as usual, came all the good natured remarks, that so infallibly follow, when one member of a society determines to deviate from the common routine; especially if that determination interfere with the pleasures of the remaining portion. He

was immediately designated as unsocial and disagreeable; his motives were liberally canvassed; and those ascribed to him, as various as the minds of his criticisers; pride, avarice, misanthropy, an evil conscience;—but the Doctor's conduct gave the lie to all these assertions, and, at last, was pronounced to be *only* mysterious.

In the mean time he went on in his course, unheeding the kindly whispers, that, sometimes, penetrated even to his ear. With Dr. Squeezetithe the rector of the parish, some slight advances towards acquaintance had been made; but, upon finding that this gentleman was more earnest in following the hounds, than fulfilling his sacred duties—more intent upon the preservation of his game, than the preservation of the souls of his flock, who were attended to only when decency positively required it—these advances rapidly declined, and, finally, ceased altogether.

If Dr. Shafton did not obtain the good will

of the surrounding gentry, he soon became the idol of the surrounding poor. Considering it his bounden duty to look into their wants and to relieve them, no one ever applied to him in vain; at the same time, their character became subject to his inspection, and, when necessary, to his reproof. But reproof was softened by relief, and advice assisted by bestowing the means of carrying it into execution. The Rector, who acted as if he thought these things beneath his own attention, did not, by the miserable stipend he allowed his Curate, (a young man of amiable manners and real piety) enable him to make up for his neglect. Mr. Strickland could barely keep up the decent respectability his calling required, and had, therefore, nothing but prayers and good wishes to bestow: Dr. Shafton endeavoured to alleviate this humiliating position, by employing him as his almoner; asking his advice; making

stature, she was finely and elegantly formed; her movements were naturally graceful, not artificially so: her joyous agility, at once, proved the innocent gaiety of her heart, and the absence of the posture master. Her face was not too classic to prevent it's claim to living loveliness: a healthy youth gave it fresh and charming hues, and an elevated mind, amiable and enchanting expressions. Her intellect was of the highest order, and had been cultivated, by her father, with equal skill and prudence. Her disposition was docile and affectionate; somewhat inclining to meditation, which tendency the Doctor judiciously checked whenever it appeared unduly to preponderate.

Grace's beauty was the theme of much conversation. As mere beauty, however, it might not have been worth so much speculation; but, as beauty, united to equal riches, it, frequently, usurped the consideration of all those mothers who had sons desirous of a rich and lovely wife. Then, did they launch out in invective

against Doctor Shafton for his unsocial habits. "It was," they exclaimed, "downright wickedness to keep a young creature so immured." The sons, in question, were equally indignant: fresh diplomatic manœuvres were set on foot; but the Doctor was still in the opposition. The dying request of his wife had made a deeper impression on him than he would have been willing to admit. He was not one, however, to believe that, under any circumstances, a human being is gifted with an insight into futurity. The communications made by God to the officiating minister, during the period of the Jewish dispensation, and the powers conveyed by Him to his apostles in later times, in the promulgation of our blessed religion, having an object so sublime and necessary, he, equally with all enlightened christian reasoners, considered perfectly demonstrable exceptions. The general occurrences of life were not, in his opinion, worthy (although, in this instance, he was acting at war with his conviction) to

overstep the ordinary limits of nature. His design of preserving Grace free from an attachment, until the stated period had elapsed, had, however, become a matter of almost superstitious importance. He reasoned that she was too beautiful to mix in society without attracting many admirers; and, although he felt assured that she would not be easily won, and that no common mind, where, unfortunately, common minds are so numerous, could secure her affections, still he decided against running the risk.

Another year elapsed, and, at the period when our story commences, Grace had completed her eighteenth year.

"Well, Grace," said Dr. Shafton to his daughter as she entered his library, "you are late from the village this morning!"

"Yes, dear sir, for it is so full of news, that it was in vain to hope to be listened to, until I had heard all that is known, and all that is imagined, upon the important and unlooked for event just now about to take place."

"What event do you allude to, my dear Grace?" asked the doctor in some surprise.

"There now!" exclaimed Grace laughing, "that is just what I expected. Here is the whole village ringing with this interesting news, and yet you are ignorant of it."

"And what is it, my child, which you consider so worthy of attention?"

"Nay, my dear sir, now you are too hasty in your conclusion—a fault which you so frequently caution me to avoid. I did not say that *I* considered the news worthy of attention, though it appears to give such general satisfaction:—but, I see it is in vain to endeavour to arouse your curiosity, so I may as well tell you at once. Know then that de Courcy Hall is again to shine forth in all it's ancient splendour; the young heir is hourly expected there, and rumour says, that he intends to make it his principal residence."

The Doctor smiled. "Is that all, Grace?"

"*All!* my dear papa; you have no idea of

sions acknowledged. Were they singular in this respect? We dare affirm that they were not, and that many of their sister maidens, for miles round, shared in the same feelings. The important announcement of the expected arrival of a young and wealthy Earl, brought immediately into play all the hopes, fears, and ambitious desires of both mothers and daughters, resident within any thing like a visiting distance of de Courcy Hall. Here, might be seen an affectionate mamma, eyeing, with a look of despondency, the waning charms of her daughter; and here, one, more fortunate, exulting in the opening perfections of hers. The ladies discussed each other's chance, with most charitable and friendly feelings—that is when their dear friends were not present. All, however, agreed in one universal feeling of satisfaction—viz., the beautiful Grace Shafton could not enter the lists against them. *That* was quite decided; for they internally and externally ejaculated, "Dr. Shafton could not,

much for her health, and promised that you would employ her son as under-gamekeeper, which with the grant of the little cottage, quite reconciled her."

"And poor Hartly?"

"He is getting rapidly well. His wife overpowered me with thanks, which are all due to you, my dearest father, who have revealed to me the delight that arises from rendering ourselves useful to others, and who supply me so plentifully with the means of being bountiful."

"By instructing you in your duty, my Grace, I have simply fulfilled my own. I have also endeavoured to show my thankfulness to the Almighty for his many blessings, as well as to promote your own happiness. Benevolence is the sweetest gratification this life affords, and those who have riches should remember that they hold a great trust, one which, if misused, it had been better they had never possessed."

"Surely, dear papa, wealth would be valueless, were it not employed for the relief of the distressed?"

"I trust, except for that purpose, it will ever be so in your eyes, my child. When, however, you see more of the world you will find how few understand its right use."

"And had it not been for you I should most likely have remained in ignorance of this, not only my principal duty, but the greatest pleasure I experience. Ah, my dearest father, how shall I ever repay you for all your care?"

"I am fully repaid, my child!" replied the happy parent, looking on his daughter with the tenderest affection. "But, come, we must not lose this lovely day; a ride will do us both good."

Adjoining Meadlands, lay the extensive enclosures, and noble park, belonging to the de Courcys. Owing to the ill health of the late Earl, which had obliged him to reside almost

entirely on the continent, where he ultimately expired, the old Hall, a grand baronial residence, had, for many years, been deserted by the family.

It was whilst performing her round of village duties that Grace had heard the report of the young Earl's arrival, and been amused with the various hopes and conjectures founded upon that event. Nor was it in the village only that the report had created a sensation. All through that part of the county, the news was carried from house to house, spreading expectation, agitation, and commotion, almost equal to the confusion caused by a visit of O'Connell to Belfast, or Ballyporeen. The Manse, in no small degree, partook of this excitement. Dr. Squeezetithe was possessed of three grown-up and marriageable daughters; each having some pretensions to beauty; and each judiciously determined to take every lawful and possible means of having those preten-

sions acknowledged. Were they singular in this respect? We dare affirm that they were not, and that many of their sister maidens, for miles round, shared in the same feelings. The important announcement of the expected arrival of a young and wealthy Earl, brought immediately into play all the hopes, fears, and ambitious desires of both mothers and daughters, resident within any thing like a visiting distance of de Courcy Hall. Here, might be seen an affectionate mamma, eyeing, with a look of despondency, the waning charms of her daughter; and here, one, more fortunate, exulting in the opening perfections of hers. The ladies discussed each other's chance, with most charitable and friendly feelings—that is when their dear friends were not present. All, however, agreed in one universal feeling of satisfaction—viz., the beautiful Grace Shafton could not enter the lists against them. *That* was quite decided; for they internally and externally ejaculated, "Dr. Shafton could not,

with any degree of decorum, visit the Earl, after having refused the society of the whole neighbourhood! Milliners were at a premium. Many a letter was despatched to dear kind friends residing in the metropolis, begging for the latest fashions. Innumerable were the aspirants on the occasion. Those who were too diffident of their own charms to aspire to the bringing down of the Earl himself, might, at least, hope to bag one of the numerous friends that would either accompany him, or be attracted to the hall by his presence.

Thus, hope, expectation and curiosity were excited to the utmost, before Grace and her father had even heard of the coming event; and then, they heard of it, if not entirely as a matter of indifference (for nothing that involved the probable improvement of the neighbourhood was a matter of indifference to Dr. Shafton, yet, as an occurrence which could not, in any way, influence their habits, or disturb the even tenor of their lives.

Grace, brought up in the most complete retirement, never dreamed of the possibility of change. Innocent and happy, she had all that her young heart desired. Loving her father with a most devoted tenderness—his almost constant companion, she felt no want of other society. Her wishes were bounded by the narrow circle of her domestic enjoyments. Her pleasures consisted in the performance of benevolent actions, which both the precept and example of her father had encouraged from her earliest childhood. These occupations, joined to her studies, her walks and rides, in the company of a man of so enlightened and cultivated a mind, became a source of constant pleasure and improvement; and Grace Shafton required neither the excitement of society, nor the gratification of vanity, to fill up her time, or contribute to her happiness. The Doctor, on his side, reaped fully the fruits of his care and solicitude; and his eye sparkled with delight as he looked on the healthful colour of his

daughter's cheek, or listened, with inward satisfaction, to the pure and elevated sentiments of her mind.

"What a fine old place de Courcy Hall is!" remarked Grace to her father, as they caught sight of it on their return from their morning's ride, "I am glad it is going to be inhabited again, and fancy it already looks more cheerful."

"Yes!" replied the doctor, "it deserves to be attended to, as well as the tenantry, who fare but poorly in the absence of a landlord. I trust, in this instance, that they will find the advantage of his presence."

"Report speaks favourably of him."

The doctor smiled.

"You look, my dear father, as if you were inclined to differ from the general opinion."

"God forbid, my child, that I should form an opinion, especially an unfavourable one, of a person of whom I know nothing; but, what can report say of one, who, I believe, has scarcely resided in his native country since his

boyhood? It is impossible for any one to say what his character may be! He is young, noble, and rich; and report naturally endows him with qualities which should always appertain to the blessings—youth, birth and fortune. I shall rejoice to hear that, in this case, it does not err."

As they entered the lodge gate, a travelling carriage and four swept by them at full speed.

"That, doubtless, is the Earl," said Dr. Shafton, "I believe that, with the exception of an only sister, he is the sole scion of his house."

CHAPTER III.

The only visitor, that occasionally diversified the scene at Meadlands, was the before-mentioned Curate, who appeared the following morning to solicit Dr. Shafton's interest and assistance in procuring him a small living just vacant. Mr. Strickland had long been attached to a young woman, in every way suited to him; and, from year to year, had waited, until the bloom of youth had faded into middle age, ere he had the least chance of encreasing his income sufficiently to admit of their union. Now, the chance had arrived, but he had little inte-

rest; and the Rector to whom he had made himself useful, and who feared he might not procure another assistant at so low a stipend, resolutely opposed his endeavours.

"I will do all I can for you," said Dr. Shafton, who entered kindly and anxiously into his views; "but you must apply to the Earl de Courcy: the living is in his gift."

"And, ten to one," said poor Strickland, "but he has, already, promised it. You will, of course, call on the Earl?"

"Why, I don't know. Certainly, if my doing so would be useful to you; but, I am as great a stranger as yourself."

"True, but there is a wide difference between obliging a wealthy neighbour, and listening to the petition of a poor curate."

"Let us hope that the Earl will be more disinterested."

"Well, I shall try. But you, surely, will call; it would seem almost uncouth to omit a mere ceremony."

"I believe you are right; yes, I ought, certainly, to leave a card; the whole neighbourhood will besiege him, and it would seem very pointed to be the only one who neglected to pay him that mark of respect."

"Besiege him! you can have no idea of the commotion his coming has caused. I, who am somewhat behind the scenes, and too insignificant to be a restraint, have really been amused with the hopes and fears and important events that are to attend his coming."

"Well, I would have you lose no time in your application; a day sometimes, in these matters, is of great importance; and business is a sufficient excuse for intruding on him so early."

The modest Strickland looked down: it was evident he thought with pain on the necessity of going to solicit the great man, and this, a young man too; and he counted on a refusal; but then he thought of her who had passed her

youth in looking forward to a union with him, and this nerved him to the task.

"You will come and let me know the success of your application; I shall be anxious to hear from you?"

"Certainly; but I am not sanguine!"

"You have my best wishes for your success, though what the village will do without you I don't know."

"Whilst you and Miss Shafton remain, it can want for nothing: God knows, until your arrival, I had little more than prayers to give its poor inmates!"

Contrary to the general hopes and anticipations of the ladies, the Earl arrived solus. This was was a sad blow to those modest and moderate maidens, who hoped some middle-aged friend might accompany him. Papas and brothers were in hot haste to show their unbounded respect, by paying the earliest possible call, and, for the first week, the Earl, as Dr.

[illegible]

[illegible]

It was about ten days after the Earl's arrival, that Grace and her father were interrupted in their quiet evening occupations, by a visit from Strickland.

"I think," said Grace, as she observed the unusual animation of his countenance, "we need scarcely ask Mr. Strickland if he has been successful: his looks speak for him."

"Is Miss Shafton right?" asked the Doctor, "may we congratulate you?"

"You may indeed:" he replied, "yes, thanks to the kindness and generosity of Lord de Courcy, I am, at last, rendered happy!"

"I rejoice to hear it!" exclaimed the Doctor, "so, you see, your anticipations were unfounded."

"Had I known Lord de Courcy, I should have judged differently. He had, however, been applied to, by Dr. Squeezetithe, for another party; but, on learning the particulars of my case, he said he should not hesitate in

his choice; for, the other applicant was, already, in possession of one living."

"Ha, that speaks well for his lordship!" exclaimed the Doctor.

"Yes," continued Strickland, "he is every thing that one would desire in a nobleman; highly informed, liberal, enlightened. To me his manners were all kindness and affability."

"When did you call?"

"Not immediately; and the description I heard of him, from those who had paid their visit, almost deterred me from going at all:—I was told that he was proud, cold, and supercilious."

"But you determined to judge for yourself; I am glad of it, you were right."

"I did; for, in the village, I heard a very different account of him: he had already made friends among the poor; and that determined me to try my fate."

"Yes," observed Grace, "I hear much good of him; he has removed the grievances of some

of his poor tenants; and Jessy, whom I sent with some necessaries to a poor woman the other evening, found his lordship's own man there, who, by his master's orders, had provided for all her wants. This man, it seems, is a great oddity, he has visited every cottage in the village, and appears anxious to know all that is going on. However, if he be rather officious, he takes care to report every case of distress, which is as promptly attended to. Of his lordship he speaks as of a miracle of goodness, and appears quite to idolize him."

"I am not surprised," replied the enthusiastic Strickland. "His amiable disposition and affable manners must win him the hearts of all his dependents."

Dr. Shafton smiled, and Strickland, observing it, remarked, "You are incredulous, I see; but why do you not call and judge for yourself?"

"Nay, not incredulous! nothing gives me more pleasure than to hear that a man, in so

high a station, is what he ought to be; but you must permit me to make some allowance for your feelings of gratitude—certainly the most amiable and delightful of sentiments, but one that is very apt to rob us of our penetration, when exerted upon the character of him to whom we are indebted for a kindness."

"My judgment would have been the same, even had my application proved unsuccessful; but, I repeat, call and judge for yourself!"

"I am perfectly satisfied with your judgment; nevertheless, I will positively pay my respects to his lordship."

Notwithstanding this declaration, Dr. Shafton still delayed his visit. A visit of mere ceremony, it was true, was easily made, but, from Strickland's account, the Earl was amiable and high-minded, and precisely the sort of person he should like, and consequently find it difficult to treat with mere formal politeness. Yet he *must* avoid an acquaintance, and *must* so conduct himself as to prevent the Earl's de-

siring *it*; for, young, handsome, and possessed of all the qualities that adorn youth, it might prove subversive of his plans were he to introduce him to his daughter. He was, if report erred not, exactly the sort of person calculated to make an impression on such a heart as Grace Shafton's. She had, already, heard much of him, and had listened with the interest so natural to youth, when the theme is the praise of noble and good actions performed by the young and the gifted. No, there must be no introduction!—he must not invite Lord de Courcy to Meadlands; if ceremony obliged him to pay his respects to the Earl, *there* it must end. "But why," he asked himself, should I alarm myself by fancying he will be more desirous of visiting me, than he has shown himself to those who were quick to welcome him?—tush, I will pay him the compliment, and think no more about it!"

Next day, the Doctor proceeded to fulfil his intention. Prejudiced, by Strickland's account,

in his favour, still, upon his introduction to Lord de Courcy, he was unprepared to meet so superior a man; and Dr. Shafton owned to himself, as he scrutinized him, that it needed not the influence of gratitude to be disposed in his favour. Tall and elegantly proportioned, there was that grace and dignity in the Earl's manners that well became his high rank. His features were singularly handsome; but the observer could not fail to be struck by his eyes, which were large and wonderfully brilliant, indicative of noble and exalted thoughts and fine sensibility: dark hazel in hue, and so sensitive of mental impression, that they spoke the emotions of the spirit, before the intelligence had been modelled by the lips. Something like pride might alarm the physiognomist in the slight curl of the lip; but the benevolent expression of the expansive brow instantly destroyed the impression, and left nothing to be feared.

"I am happy," he said, extending his hand to the Doctor, to see a gentleman whose

character has already won my full esteem; I began to fear that Dr. Shafton would not think it worth his while to visit one who had so long played truant to his country."

"Now that your lordship has returned, permit me to hope that you will find your country sufficiently interesting to induce you to remain in it."

"It never was otherwise than interesting to me; but the long protracted malady of my father, kept me absent against my inclination. No!" he continued, "I hold it the duty of every man, situated as I am, to endeavour to contribute to the happiness of his fellow creatures; which can nowhere be so properly done as in his own country, and on his own estate."

"It is a sentiment worthy of your lordship, and one, I dare prophesy, that will contribute to your own personal happiness, as well as to that of others."

"You speak from experience," said the Earl.

Soon after, the conversation changed; but on every topic the Earl displayed a fund of information, that, joined to his naturally acute powers of observation, rendered him a delightful companion. The Doctor insensibly began to forget his fears and his resolution.

At last, the latter arose to take his leave, when de Courcy, pointing to a table on which lay a huge pile of notes, said, "I have received innumerable invitations from the surrounding gentry, but, I confess, I feel unwilling to enter into a system of visiting, which, from the specimens I have seen of our society here, does not promise to be much to my taste."

"I know little or nothing of it; for I retired into the country solely with the object of getting rid of visiting; which appears to me, even in the very best circles, to entail ceremonies and obligations that are scarcely worth the loss of time they occasion; but in a limited circle of

ingly, "from what I hear of Miss Shafton's exertions in the village, I should imagine that the time had arrived to test her disposition."

"She has, indeed, well repaid my care; but she is yet young, perfectly happy, and undesirous of change; and I am in no haste to disturb the tranquillity she enjoys." The last few words were uttered in a sad and serious tone, which implied that the speaker had observed much of life, and knew the value of the period of quiet happiness expressed in his previous assertion.

"My dear sir," responded de Courcy, "I neither doubt the justice of your motives nor the wisdom of your reasoning. I wish I could discover only as good an excuse for ridding myself of the nuisance pending over me, in the shape of dinner parties, breakfast parties, and tea parties. But, since you will not allow me to get off altogther, let me, at least, hope that I am not to be included in your general sentence of banishment, and that I may,

occasionally, refresh myself with a little of your society."

It was impossible for the Doctor to avoid giving the Earl an invitation; he did so frankly; but added, as the thought of Grace recurred to his mind, "your lordship will, I fear, find little to attract you in my solitude."

"I shall convince you of the contrary," replied the Earl, as he shook hands with the Doctor, after a visit lengthened quite beyond the limits of a call.

The Doctor was not a little perplexed as, during his walk home, he reflected on the probable consequences of his visit. The Earl's manner was frank and sincere; and he felt annoyed at being obliged to treat his advances with coolness. Under any other circumstances, he would have considered the offer of the friendship of such a man, a high privilege; for, he had had proof that his mind was of a very superior order. He began to perceive that he had been unwise in allowing the request made

by his wife, to effect so deep an impression on his mind: but the promise had been given, and must be adhered to. He must endeavour to keep Grace out of the way at the time of the Earl's visit; yet, that would not be easy; for, accustomed to be much with her father, it would require great management to prevent their meeting. Trusting, however, something to chance and something to the said management, the Doctor dismissed the subject.

The Earl, on his side, was greatly prepossessed by Dr. Shafton's manners and conversation; he was the only person he had yet seen, that promised to prove a companion. His character for benevolence, and the fame of his daughter's beauty, were also prominent points of attraction.

When the Doctor had taken leave, de Courcy began to hunt for some old black-letter volume, that he had promised to send to Meadlands for the Doctor's examination. Having succeeded in his search, he rang the bell, and

desired Larry to be sent to him. Before we introduce this personage to the notice of the reader, we will give a slight sketch of his character; he having the good luck to figure in many important events of our history.

Launcelot, (more familiarly speaking, Larry) Monaghan, was one of those migratory birds, that, at the approach of hard weather, come over in such clouds from our sister Isle. He was the only surviving sample of his family, "which (he used to say) was a ruinous pity, as good people were so uncommon scarce. For, my mother had none of us, barrin' myself, and, consequently, there's only one of us remaining." It was reported that he was an Irishman; a report which he never troubled himself to deny; probably, because it would have been all one if he did.

For every occasion, this *naive* creature had a fitting, or rather unfitting, aphorism, or the fag end of an old song; which he forced upon the carpet, in the most reckless and often

unbecoming manner. For instance, upon the death of an uncle, who had been a very hard drinker, he advised his widow to—

"Give over weeping, it niver 'ill shake him:
Put the grog near the coffin, and see how 'twill wake him."

and, at another time, he cheered a friend, who was proceeding to be tried for a conspiracy, of which he was perfectly innocent, with—

"One step in the cart,
And the other on the ladder;
Right boldly call out
For your 'gallows cap and fedder!'"

From a variety of causes—none of a very fortunate nature—he was forced to leave his native land. On the deck of the steam-vessel, in the following pathetic style he breathed her his farewell.

"Musha, then, good bye to *you* Erin! and may the unqualified blessin' of the mother o' marcy stick close an' tight to you; and, as the venerable Dan says, continue to keep you

'First flower o' the earth an' first jim o' the say! Amin! oh Lord! And may her cruel and sowl-consuming curse, blight, blisther and bother, every blood-sucking slave that ates the bread of your misfortune, and dhrinks the tay of the bitterness of your affliction! Amin, oh Lord aqually!"

"Out, you apostolical papist!" cried a sharp and vulgar cockney voice, at his elbow, "will you vituperate upon the quality in that ere way? I'll tell the captain to pitch you overboard."

"May be you'd thry and save him that throuble, young man," said Larry, without a moment's hesitation, "bekase he's mighty busy jist now, on more pressing consarns?"

"You're an imperent and howdacious pauper! so you are," retorted the other.

"Yerra, then, where did you larn that a hinny?" asked pat with provoking gravity.

"I concocted it out of your infamous language," returned the offended Briton.

"By dat cross, den," roared Larry (representing with his fingers the sign he had invoked) "I'll concoct a receipt in full, for the damage resaved, out of your parsin," and he threw off his 'repale frieze.'

The other was not slack to accommodate him; and, through the kindness of the ship's crew, and the momentary absence of the captain, they had the forecastle to themselves.

The stranger had good courage, and some science; Larry the desperate pluck of his region; with the impetuosity of a Murat. To it they went in fine style; the Englishman cool and cautious as a fox in a hen-roost; the Irishman fiery and furious like a young eagle in a rookery. It was evident that the Englishman would have preferred a more experienced cuffer; for the repeated sallies of his antagonist put him to the utmost stretch of his resources; and it was equally evident that the more the Irishman exerted himself, the more he seemed to warm to the sport.

After some little severity had been inflicted upon him, the Englishman at last struck under; and was doggedly retreating: but Larry was not to be baulked of his "revinge."

"By Jacob's tripes!" shouted he, "*I* aint satisfied, whatever you may be. The honour o' the Monaghans is impached, and I'm the only livin' instance of the family, and it isn't at this time o' day, I'm going to disgrace 'em in their honest, dacent graves." He darted on his foe with the speed and force of a steam carriage; seized him in his arms, and lifting him up, like a two-year-old baby, bore him to the side of the vessel, and fairly dropped him into the water. All this was the act of a moment: no one foresaw his intention; neither was there any time for interference.

"Honour for ever! the Monaghans are revinged" shouted the conqueror. "Now, bad luck to you, lind a hand here, and save the cratur's life. Marcy is the rale glory of the victorious!" In less than a second, he tied a

rope round his middle, and, giving the end of it into the hands of some of the stoutest of the spectators, crossed his forehead, and plunged into the water.

The Englishman had just risen, for the first time, and, before he again sank, Larry took a "clinch of him, with all the satisfaction in nature."

"Pull away, ye divils, boys, jewels! a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether! Harrah, repale, repale!" and he travestied Rule Britannia.

> "When *Erin* first, at heaven's command,
> Arose from out the azure say"—

here's a rising of the populace for you! pull, pull, boys, darlin's! pull for the dear life of this astonished cratur, and the last of the Monaghans."

Order and friendly feeling being, soon after, restored, the ship got under weigh, and the passengers under the influence of the elements.

Larry thought he had got into the House of Commons, for, he said, there seemed to be "nothing a-doing but spoutin."

One poor young woman, who was going to join her husband in England, appeared so sick and weak that she could scarcely hold her infant in her arms. She was wretchedly poor, yet attired with a decency that showed her wish to struggle against poverty. Larry, touched with her sufferings, went up to her with some brandy-and-water, which he had procured on purpose, and which he made her drink "complately." He then wrapped her up in his bran-new coat, and insisted upon nursing the child. She faintly told him it was too young "to do without her."

"Oh, it's all one for that! let me alone for attinding to its comforts!" He soon hushed the little wretch to sleep, after having given it a quietus of brandy-and-water.

The feeling and delicacy displayed in Larry's attention to this poor young woman, were ob-

served by two very different spectators; yet produced in both a very similar kind of feeling. One was Lord de Courcy, then returning from a visit to his Irish estates: the other, the Englishman, who had been baptized in "rale holy water," as Larry declared the river Lea to be. The latter, who was very sick, beckoned to Larry, and, with the true feeling of an Englishman, lent him a Mackintosh cloak, and made him accept, for the young woman, a trifle of money, to help to get her what necessaries she might require.

"Why thin, give us your hand!" cried Larry. "The divil blisther my tongue, when it spakes agin you, or your country agin; and sure its extramely obleeged to you I am, on the poor young cratur's account; for, somehow, I forgot to bring with me more than was aqual to pay the passage, and to lave me a thrifle or so for keepin' the breath within me. But, isn't there any thing I can do to ase yourself now; a dhrop of brandy, or so?"

"No, thank you, no, I'm too far gone to take any thing. I'll never call the Irish savages again!" he muttered to himself, as Larry turned away.

The steward here stopped our hero, to inform him that the Lord de Courcy wished to speak with him. "That's he in the fur cap," and he passed on.

"The Lord de Courcy! Mother o' marcy! and the divil a taste o' clane shirt about my unholy carcase! and this furrin Mackintos, and the babby:—oh, jerry above, what a figure I shall cut forenint him! Yet, what 'ill he think o' me if I neglict him? The Lord betwuxt us and harm, here goes for't!"

"Did your honourable lordship condiscind to give me the pleasure of being useful to your worship?"

"Are you proceeding to England in search of employment, my good fellow?" enquired Lord de Courcy.

"I'm doing that same, your lordship."

"What can you do to be useful?"

"Any thing, and every thing, your rivirence!"

"Except nursing, I presume?"

"Oh! your honour is takin' the weight o'me, I'm 'feared."

"No, indeed, my friend; if you think I could mock the benevolence, which actuated the kindly services you have rendered yonder poor creature, you do me an injustice. Tell me, then, is there any thing that prevents your coming into my service?"

"The heavens forbid, your mightiness! sure I'm ready the blessed minute that I've done my duty by this unasy innocent."

"Well, then, I shall retain you. But at what are you most handy? can you look to a horse?"

"Does your lordship mane, can I watch him from straying upon other peoples' premises? I'm bowld enough to say, that I'm thoroughly capable of doing that same."

"No, I did not mean exactly that. I meant,

could you groom him, keep him in good order, feed him, physic him."

"Physic a hos? the lord love your honour, you wouldn't have me give a hos physic, surely?"

"And why not?"

"What! make the cratur as big a fool as a christian? no, my lord, I *can't* physic a hos!—Sure he knows himself where hos-chesnuts grow, when he has an iliment."

"Well what can you do?"

"I can dig, plough, and harrow; thrim a garden like a Germin; white-wash a house, and thatch it complate; cut black turf uncommon nate, and worm a bull dog."

"But none of these services would be useful to me. Can you not do any thing else?"

"I can shine a boot, your worship, like a half-pay officer; and (what am I thinking of?) sure I was three years in the sarvice of Squire Pinchhide, who did nothing at all all day but bedizin himself, and ask me how he looked afther

it; and he larned me a world of throublesome things, that young gintlemen have recoorse to, to look killing. I was his head vally for three years, and then I left him, 'cause I could not howld out any longer. He went raging mad about the tying of his cravat one morning, and tould me I was no better than a clumsy-fingered-lout. I never diskivered what he meant by *lout*, but, as to clumsy fingers, your honour sees the charge wont hould, only, the child has been sucking 'em and spiling 'em in this manner, in the absince of its nat'ral orgin."

"Well, I dare say you will make yourself useful. You shall have twenty pounds a year, to keep about my person."

"Make it tin, your lordship, and let me work in the garden; for, I'm 'feared your honour would find me but a clumsy-fingered-lout, like Squire Pinchhide."

"No fear of that: I always tie my own cravat."

"Oh, thin, I'll clinch the matther immadi-

ately your lordship! and 'tis proud that I'll be to sarve your honour to the downright death; for the kindness of Heaven shines in your countenance, and it's iligant music in your voice. May God bless your worship; and may your noble life be a continual summer, Amin!"

"Thank you, and now, what is your name?"

"Larry Monaghan, saving your lordship's presence, and the last and only child of my mother."

"Well, Larry, take these, as a bounty before service; and get yourself what necessaries you may require." He put five sovereigns into his hand. "And give these to that poor young woman," adding three more.

Larry made his congé and proceeded towards the part of the vessel where his protegée was.

"One! two!! three!!! four!!!! five!!!!! six!!!!!! seven!!!!!!! eight!!!!!!!! goolden guineas! I'm sleepin', I'm thinkin'! Why the goose that laid the goolden eggs was a fool to him! Prosperity be like a Mackintos cloak

about him for iver, say I; and sartinly a wonderful warm and comfortable thing it is, no doubt; and it laughs at the rain and the salt-wather jist like an oiled pig. Sing out, a gra, sing out! Come along to the mammy that owns you, and let's cheer her heart with a ray of comfort from these eight shining and musical suns;" and he gingled the money in his hand, to the manifest delight of the child, who crowed and chuckled abundantly.

"Corah ma chree!" said Larry, addressing himself to the mother, "what are you wishing for?" Is there anything wealth can buy, that 'ill give satisfaction to your innocent bosom? Spake out, a hinny; or make me a nod when I've named the object of your wishes. "What would you say to the wing of a chicken?" No? Well, no, then. A bit o'cowld ham, all lane, and a bisky—and plenty o' mustard. No? 'Try agin,' says the Taffy-man. I have it! A mutton chop highly peppered, and a drop o' katchup, with a rasarve battery of Port wine

nagus? Sure I thought it! Lave me alone for plasing the fair!" and, as he went on his errand, he hummed—

> "You may go look 'athin the towns
> Of England, Wales, or Scotland;
> And cast your eye, both low and high,
> It doesn't matther in what land;
> But, when you're tired of trying where
> The proper sort of blade is,
> You must come back to Paddy Whack,
> The boy to plase the ladies!"

"Here, you tongue-tied steward, bring this young famale 'oman a hot mutton chop, without a skreg of fat on it—do ye mind me?—well peppered, and set a-going with kitchup sauce; and a rasped roll; and tell that iligant wife o' yours, in the high-caul cap, to mix a tumbler-*full*—are you 'tinding to me?—of genuine port wine nagus, hot as a cat-ama-ran, with a slice o' limon a-swimming in it, and a scrape o nutmeg to make it look purty; and—take your satisfaction out o' that!"

At the sight of gold the steward hurried off to please the Hibernian, who, in return for his

alacrity in attending to his order, and his protegée's comfort, got good friends with him over a tolerably stiff glass of grog. It was this person who now answered de Courcy's summons; though so transformed in appearance, that we doubt whether Mrs. Monaghan herself would have recognized the last scion of her race. Dressed in a handsome suit of plain clothes, his short curly hair was, perhaps, the only thing that would have betrayed his identity; that is whilst he remained silent, for there was no mistaking his accent, nor the shrewd glance of his eye.

"Larry," said Lord de Courcy, "take this book, with my best compliments, to Dr. Shafton. You know where he resides?"

"Surely, my lord, surely."

"You seem very well disposed to do this errand, Larry. May I ask the reason?"

"Sartainly, my lord."

"Well, then, what is it?"

"Why, my lord, seeing as how Miss Grace

(the Lord multiply his blessings on her!) is little less than a heavenly agent, showering, like a fountain in the wilderness, the healing sthrames of comfort and consolation: giving to the living the manes of continuing this life; and to the dyin', the manes of beginning another; an' considerin' that the doctor is the spring that supplies that beautiful an' useful fountain, it is no wonder that a sinner like myself, God mend me! should be anxious to cultivate the acquaintance of such out an' out saints."

"Is that all, Larry?"

"Isn't it enough, my lord?—Isn't it enough, to see, as I've seen, with my own open and remarkable eyes, the hands o'that lily o' tinderness supporting the old gray head; an' whisperin' an angel's whisper in its ears; and soothin' its fears; an' asin' its perplexities; an' fulfillin' its every remainin' earthly wish, while the breath is yet a-flutherin' in its worn out resciptical. An' prayin' the prayer, an' closin' the eyes,

when all is over, like a relation o' the deceased. If that aint an inducement, and an attraction, and a rason for draggin' the heart out o' one, I don't know what is!"

"You have seen Miss Shafton, then?" asked lord de Courcy.

"As well as my eyes would let me, my lord, for they were a-raining, like a pair o' clouds over the beautiful city o' Cork; an' sure, through the mist o' my tears, I could see that angel at her angel employment, as airnest as father Matthy himself."

"And who is father Matthy, Larry?"

"Doesn't your honour know father Matthy?" screamed Larry, as he crossed himself; "the Lord o' Glory, sort our sinses in right order! does your lordship râlly mane to say, that you don't know father Theobald Matthy the savir o' Ireland?"

"Indeed, Larry, I confess, my present ignorance! what has he done to deserve the title you have given him?"

"Done? it ain't in the power o' man to say what he has done! Sure, he prevailed upon three millions of our deluded brothers an' sisters to fast from whiskey and tossicatin' liquors, until the distillaries were broken root an' branch. An' sure, he took the Bottomy gardens* an' made a beautifnl *pare le chays* of 'em, as I heard a person say; an' sure, he has made a college o' the fine house next door, and brings up the risin' generation in it for the glory o' the Lord, an' the practical sarvice of his creatures. An' sure, it isn't there only, but all over the cultivated univarse, that his fame is meantherin'; securing for him a moniment that

* Father Matthew's beautiful cemetery at Evergreen, occupying twelve acres of land, was, formerly, the Botanic Gardens of the Cork Royal Society. On the departure of their head gardener, Mr. Drummond) to Swan River (after his trial for shooting Hyde, who was in the habit of filching the rose trees and geraniums, the place was sold to a private individual, from whom it was purchased by the justly celebrated Theobald Matthew. It is now rapidly rivalling *Père la Chaise.* Some beautiful monuments (a few by the distinguished sculptor Hogan) already embellish the spot.

won't crumble, in the hearts an' heads of all thrue christians; and it isn't marble, or poffery, or alabasthard, that he's a-looking for; or a bit o' brass tablet in Westminster Abbey, either, amongst the fine fellows, that are lyin' there, afther the world-an'-all of murther and misery they've committed in the flesh."

"You're no admirer then, of military renown, I see, Larry."

"Not a bit, my lord! I've been behind the curtin', as they say, an' I'd rayther be a 'gallery slave' than a soldier; small blame to me, seein' that the officers themselves haven't an asy birth of it. The corporals quarillin' aginst the sargints; the sargints aginst the cornets; the cornets aginst the liftenants; the liftenants aginst the captins, an' the captins with the colonels; an' the chaps up above all intirely, with the whole united sarvice. But as I was sayin', or detarminin' in my mind to say, or, rayther, as I *did* actually say to your honour, it's natral enough I should like to carry this

book, which I doubt not has a dale of larnin' in it, up to Madelands, that I may enjoy the sight of the good—"

"Quite natural, Larry; so hasten away with it."

Larry made his bow, and de Courcy consumed the remainder of the day in looking over plans for the improvements he meditated. Not altogether satisfied with his own opinion, he decided upon consulting Dr. Shafton. "Yes," he said, "I will go to him to-morrow, he has a correct taste, and—" he might have added, "*I* have a great curiosity to see the fair being, whose perfections I hear from every mouth."

CHAPTER IV.

GRACE had already departed to fulfil her village duties, when de Courcy arrived; this was no small relief to the Doctor.

"You will judge of my desire to avail myself of your permission, by my *empressment* to wait on you," said de Courcy, as the Doctor shook him by the hand, "and, see, I am going to put your good nature to a trial, by asking you to look over these plans with me; and to give me your opinion upon them, providing, that you have nothing of importance that claims your attention."

"I am quite at your service," answered the Doctor; and he readily entered into the discussion of the merits of the different plans; in which, to do justice to de Courcy's discernment, he displayed both taste and judgement. This, was an excuse for a long visit; but de Courcy's curiosity, if he had any, remained ungratified; for Grace, although returned, did not, upon hearing of his presence, make her appearance.

"You will come then and give me your opinion and assistance, as I proceed?"

The Doctor promised compliance: he preferred paying the Earl a visit, to receiving him in his own house, where it would be difficult always to prevent an introduction to Grace. But de Courcy was not content with seeing the Doctor, only at those times: he, frequently, walked to Meadlands; and a growing friendship was, evidently, the result of their companionship.

It *was* strange (and de Courcy thought it *very strange*) that, although a friendly intimacy

had taken place between them, weeks had elapsed and he had not seen Grace. The Doctor had found the difficulty less than he imagined, for, Grace, unused to strangers, and uninvited by her father to remain, always retired when she heard the Earl approaching. De Courcy's curiosity had increased, in proportion to the difficulty he found in gratifying it; so that the very pains the Doctor took to avoid their meeting, proved the most likely means of occasioning it. No sooner had de Courcy really admitted to himself that he wished to see Grace, than, finding he had no chance of obtaining his desire by going to Meadlands, he made every attempt, that his ingenuity could devise, to meet her elsewhere. He walked frequently to the village, but, as though fate had determined to baffle him, he never happened to encounter her. He strolled about the confines of his own plantations, which bordered the park of Meadlands, in the hope of catching sight of her, but to no purpose. Difficulties,

however, only increased the ardour of the pursuit; while a sincere admiration of Doctor Shafton's mind and talents, rendered him more desirous of seeing her, who had been his only care for so many years. There was something, too, almost mysterious in the complete seclusion to which the Doctor condemned her. De Courcy was too delicate to mention a subject, that the other, evidently, avoided; but, he was fully bent on obtaining his desire. Obstacles, even in trifles, are incentives to the youthful and energetic.

"Well, Larry," exclaimed he, after having returned from the village, again baffled in his attempts:—I am greatly inclined to believe that Miss Shafton is the angel you described her; for she is not to be seen by corporeal eyes."

"Corporal's eyes! I should think not, my lord! It ain't fit that such a paragin should be stared at by the milintary."

"You mistake me, Larry, I mean that she is not visible to the eye; I have felt some de-

sire to see her, and taken some little trouble to be gratified; and yet, never have had a glimpse of her; so, I must believe her to be either an angel or a fairy, and you to be a Scotchman, with the capability of 'second sight!"

"Oh, my lord! God forgive you for calling me a Scotchman! any thing my lord, from a hathen to a half-pay officer! but, if your honour would wish to spare yourself the pain of havin' broke an honest and faithful cratur's heart, don't, don't niver agin, (and he dropped on his knees) go for to scandilize me with sich a nick-name!"

"Why, my good fellow, what do you see so terrible in the name? The Scotch are a worthy, clever, brave and frugal people."

"I don't doubt it, my lord, since your honour says it; but, sure you're as marciful as an angel; and I know you'd excuse even the anti-thrinitarians, who don't believe in the vargin. But, for a rason I have, I beg, on my two bended knees, you'll niver call me a Scotchman agin!"

"Well, get up, Larry, I promise you; but am quite at a loss to understand the reason of your dislike."

"I'll tell your honour all about it. My mother was once a-thravellin' in the black mountains; an' a thinkin' how comfortable it would be to be any where else—for mighty black, an' cowld, an' altogither dismal like they looked. Well, in the gloom of her heart, she began to sing,—an' I mind me it was the "Cruiskeen laun," that she tould me she was performin'—when her ears were confused by the most unmortial sounds in natur; an', in the twinklin' of a bed-post, out rushed three craturs, very like men, until their parsins drew near the middle. God bethune us an' harm! they had nothin', but a mighty undacent thrifle of a petticoat, a-floating an' a-flutterin' about their knees, and to compalte the pictur, they had crimson jackys on, as if they belonged to the sodger chaps; an' they were a caperin', an' swearin', an' kickin' their heels

like monkeys on a fryin'-pan. My mother was, nat'rally, struck dead with terror and astonishment; an' ran, an' roared, an' roared, an ran, 'till she got to Kate Maloney's cabin, where, savin' your lordships prisince, she gave posthumerous birth to myself. She heard, afterwards, that they were three Scotchmen, that were a-comin to be billited in the neighbourhood. So, my lord, I was marked with an inversion for a Scotchman at my enthry into the world, an' the older I grow, be coorse, the sthronger grows my disthaste, God help me! But touching Miss Grace, if your honour desires to have a sight of her, sure you've only to ride down the boreen there, an' you'll come upon herself an' the Docther a takin' a ride; God bless 'em. I see 'em a-going' down the aveny, as I was comin' up, to your lordship."

"And, why the deuce did you not tell me that before? Bid them bring my horse round instantly!"

"The hos is at the door, my lord, if it's willin' you'd be to intherdict them an' join them in their coorse!"

In an instant, de Courcy was mounted, and following the direction given by Larry.

It was a lovely morning, and Grace, her cheek glowing with the healthful hue that an exhilirating exercise produces; and her father were returning from their ride, when, from behind a hedge, near which they were passing, some one discharged a fowling-piece, and this, so close, that Grace's horse took fright. Starting and giving one desperate plunge, he darted off at full speed. She was a practised horsewoman; but what was her strength in comparison with that of the powerful animal, who now acknowledged neither curb nor rein? It was in vain to hope to check his course; equally vain to try and direct it: and away he dashed with the rapidity and rashness of a torrent*. For some time, she kept her presence of mind; but,

* "Torrents less rapid and less rash."—MAZEPPA.

as the animal, gathering additional terror from his own speed, strained on with encreased energy, her strength and courage began to fail. She was lost; and she felt it—for, the course he took led to a descent, so steep, that, at the pace she was being carried, she must, inevitably, be dashed to pieces. But rescue was at hand. A gentleman, who, from a distance, had observed the first start, and saw the present peril, instantly took the only means left of saving her. For an instant, he marked the course of the frightened animal, then, with lightening speed, galloped to intercept his further progress; and threw himself across the path, just in time to prevent her destruction. He seized the reins, which Grace, no longer, had any strength to hold, and, with a violent effort, that bore the horse back on his haunches, he checked his further advance. Then, springing from his saddle, he received the fainting girl in his arms.

De Courcy, for it was he, who (having failed in his design of intercepting, or, as Larry had

it, 'interdicting' Dr. Shafton and his daughter, was loitering along the highway) gazed with rapture on the beautiful being that lay insensible in his embrace. He bore her to a neighbouring stream; bathed her forehead and her hands, and soon had the satisfaction to perceive the first symptoms of returning animation. Her hat had fallen off, permitting her dark and silken hair to escape around a face, which, though pale and insensible, was, he thought, the most exquisitely beautiful he had ever beheld. He watched it eagerly, until the unclosing of "i dui bei lumi," gave a new life to the fair mirror. As de Courcy observed consciousness returning, he tried to soothe her alarm, and to tranquillize her agitated feelings. "You must let me still support you," he said, as she tried to raise herself, "you are not yet strong enough."

She gazed on him, while he spoke, without appearing to understand him—then, as if suddenly comprehending her situation, in a hurried

and eager voice, she exclaimed—"My father, where is my father?"

"Fear not, dear lady," said de Courcy, "Dr. Shafton will be with you presently, he is quite well: anxiety for your safety is the only thing that disquiets him."

At this moment, the Doctor, almost frantic with fear and anguish, arrived. One glance shewed him that his child was safe; he flew towards her, caught her in his arms, looked to see if she were really unhurt; then, pressing her to his bosom, seemed totally overcome with joy and thankfulness, and unconscious of any thing except the safety of his idolized child.

"My father," said Grace at last, "you must thank my preserver."

The Doctor turned to de Courcy. "I cannot thank him:" he said, "words are inadequate to express my overflowing gratitude."

"Neither are they needed, my dear friend. I shall ever consider this as one of the happiest moments of my life; and am as thankful as you

can be, that I have been the means of saving such a life." And his eye again rested upon Grace, who, now perfectly restored, *looked* her gratitude.

The servants here came up, having succeeded in catching Grace's horse; who, being once checked in his course, and disembarrassed by his rider, had galloped directly off to the adjoining field, where they found him quietly grazing.

"I think," said de Courcy, "we must not let Miss Shafton mount again to-day. Shall I send for the carriage?"

"Thank you, no!" replied Grace, "I have not courage enough to mount, but I think the walk home would rather relieve me."

The Doctor shook his head. "You will not be equal to the walk; but we will advance and meet the carriage, which the servant shall order the moment that he arrives with the horses."

Orders were given to this effect, and Grace, supported by her father and de Courcy, walked slowly towards Meadlands. She did, indeed, seem scarce equal to the exertion; for the terror

she had undergone had made her weak and trembling. They had so nearly reached home, before the carriage met them, that Grace declared it was absurd to get in; the Doctor however, insisted, and another five minutes brought them to the house.

The Doctor's first care, upon reaching Meadlands, was to insist on Grace retiring to her room, and lying down. "I shall send you something," he said, "to compose you, and you must try and sleep.

"Quite impossible to sleep, dear papa; but I will do as you bid me, if it will make you better pleased." Saying which, she would have taken leave of de Courcy, but the Doctor exclaimed; "No, I can't allow him to go; that is, unless he has some more agreeable engagement."

"Indeed, I have nothing half so agreeable: but I ought not to trespass on your hospitality today; so, you had better not ask me, for I shall find the temptation difficult to resist."

"Do not say no on my account;" said Grace

smiling, as she left the room, "for you will see that, by dinner time, I shall have forgotten all about my fright; all except your kind aid."

When the Doctor and de Courcy were left together, the former would have again expressed his gratitude, but de Courcy stopped him.

"I will not hear of thanks," he said, "fie! would you not have done the same yourself?"

"I should have tried; but few could have succeeded so well as you have."

"Thank God I have! but now, let us say no more about it."

From this period, de Courcy became an intimate friend: it was in vain to contend against fate; and the Doctor could not help reflecting how much better it had been, if he had allowed Grace to meet de Courcy at once. Now, their introduction had taken place, under circumstances of such strong interest, that to Grace, at least, it was fraught with danger; for, what woman can look with indifference upon the man,

who has preserved her life; that man, too, young, handsome, and accomplished?

He made some few unavailing efforts to keep them from meeting too often; but all was in vain. De Courcy had either some book for Grace, or Grace would ask him to assist her in the reading of some Italian poet (his long residence in that country having rendered the language as familiar to him as his native tongue); or he had received the music of the last new opera; or—in fact there were the thousand and one excuses, which people find it so easy to invent, when they desire each other's company. No wonder, then, that the Doctor grew weary of the struggle. What could he do? To behave with ingratitude to the preserver of his child's life, was not to be thought of: and to mention his real motive to Grace, would, perhaps be the very means of causing that which he wished to avoid. "I believe," thought the Doctor, "I must leave it in the hands of a

wiser judge than I am. I have done my best to fulfil my promise; there is little better than a year wanting to complete the period; and, it is possible my fears conjure up a danger, which, in reality, is not to be apprehended."

Seldom a day now passed without bringing de Courcy to Meadlands; and his society seemed to be looked for as something necessary. Sometimes, Larry was despatched with a selection of the choicest flowers; and a more delighted messenger could not have been chosen. He soon suspected how matters would turn out, and, as he considered himself every 'way bound to folly a good example,' he lost no great time, in making interest in the heart of the pretty Jessy, Grace's own maid.

One morning, as Larry reached Meadlands with a glowing nosegay of rare and beautiful flowers, the first person he encountered (probably, because she was on the watch for him) was Jessy. He immediately regaled her with—

" Oh! woman, lovely woman!
Where'er my steps may sthray,
I'll be your humble sarvint,
Unto my dying day:
I'll screen you from the climate
In the shelter of my arms;
And with the kiss of vartuous love,
Salute your blushing charms.
Sing Och hone, och hone, how I wish I was married!"

" For shame, Larry, how can you sing such improper poetry? it makes my very flesh creep!"

" Crape! is that all? Whoo! it ought to set you a-leapin' an' boundin' like an unasy *chemise*."

" Why, what do you mean by that, Larry?"

" Why, I mane one o' those wild animals, that William Tell, the Daniel O'Connell o' Switzerland, used to hunt; they're as common in his counthry, as pigs in ould Ireland. But, now, that I can bear the dazzle o' your countenance, how is your solitary self this mornin'?"

" *Solitary* self, what do you mean by that?"

" Why bekase of your being *singular* in your beauty, that's all. There's nothin' that's a-con-

veyin' itself on two legs, that's half so beautiful as you are, my darlint!"

"You're a flatterer, Larry; you're not in earnest, now."

"Flattherer! Not in arnest! listen to her you holy angels that tind on innocence; listen how she backbites my caracter, an' I to the force! Och, that I should live to be called a flattherer by one o' the loveliest vargins in the christian universe! I could weep, I declare I could, only 'twould, I'm towld, agrivate my consthernation."

"Well, Larry, don't be unhappy: I didn't mean to hurt your feelings, indeed, I didn't!"

"Well, when will I forget that same? the sowl's a tumbling out o' my body! och, murther, did I ever!"

"Come, Larry, don't think about it, I didn't mean to give you pain! do, do forgive me," and the simple girl, believing him really in earnest, took his hand.

"I'll forgive you as the fox did the lamb, when he asked her to walk in the bog of Allin

with him," and, catching her in his arms, he half-smothered her with kisses.

"Oh, Larry, Larry, I'll scream, I will, if you don't leave off!" and, bursting from him, she was making towards the house.

"Well, honour bright, Jessy, I've done, though not half satisfied; come, come, fair's fair! you wounded my feelings, an' doubted my thruth, an' I had a right to rivinge; but rivinge is rivinge, an', since you don't like them, which it's hard on me to believe,—there, then, I've done! But, look at this charmin' nosegay I've got for Miss Grace; may the angels of heaven be her body-guard! an' a message, from his lordship, all about goin' ridin' with her at two o'clock to thry the new horse, that he says is as gintle as a lamb. An' a valible brace of antic pistils for the Doctor, heaven bless the silver crown of his head, an' keep the Sexton many a long day idle!—A brace o' pistils look;" and he held one of them up to his shoulder, singing out.

"Oh, bowld Captain Brennan was
A valible brave soldier,
He carried his blunderbush
Right over his right shoulder;
With my right fal de ral! an'——"

"Hush, hush, Larry, and come away with you, do; and bring the nosegay to Miss Grace."

The flowers were received, and carefully treasured.

Who that has felt the birth of love, can forget the excessive, the overflowing happiness that accompanies it? Its approach is dressed in smiles; and all nature appears to sympathise with the secret joy of the heart;—the heart so full of happiness, that it grows sceptical as to the existence of sorrow; so overflowing with benevolence, that, in the height of its own gladness, it would that all mankind were sharers in a bliss so perfect; a bliss, whose source it is hardly able to understand or define. Yes, a first, a pure love, is a new existence.

Even the most sullen feel its influence; forget, for a time, their harshness, and learn to smile and to sympathise. What then must have been its effect on Grace? She had never dreamed of love; the calm tenor of her life had concealed from her almost the knowledge that such a passion existed. Unconscious of the source, from whence flowed the stream of happiness that bathed her feelings, she yet drank in all its sweetness. She, often, wondered at the intoxication of this new delight: her former uniform and calm cheerfulness was exchanged for a gay buoyancy of feeling, to which she had, hitherto, been a stranger; and, at times, for a pensiveness equally unaccountable, yet equally charming. Then, would she seek solitude, shunning even the presence of her beloved parent, to indulge her musing melancholy.

Weeks passed on in the indulgence of this all-engrossing feeling. Was the Doctor lulled into security?—or did he want penetration, that he observed not the change in his daugh-

ter's demeanour? The watchful are often lulled to sleep; the penetrating, deceived.

Dr. Shafton fancied that love was always accompanied with a certain degree of pensiveness; and (as we have said) Grace always took care to indulge those moods in solitude; so that the observing father was perfectly unaware of its existence. She was gayer than ever; which tended to lull him into a still greater security. He forgot that happy and hopeful love gladdens the heart. He forgot to ask himself *why* she was more gay? and contented himself with beholding her bright with health and happiness.

Of de Courcy's feelings the Doctor had formed a better estimate. That he loved Grace he could not doubt. There was no mistaking his eager unrepressed gaze of admiration; his restless desire to be ever near her; his unwearied endeavours to discover how to gratify her every wish. Neither did he appear careful to conceal it from the Doctor; and—what

father could look forward to such a union without feelings of pride and gratification? Not Dr. Shafton; he owned to himself that the match was desirable in every point of view, and much more splendid than he had either wished or anticipated. To do him justice, it was neither the wealth nor title of de Courcy that he appreciated. What obstacle, then, was there to prevent it? It was to persuade de Courcy to have only a little patience, if, as the Doctor feared, he should make his declaration before the stated period. "Grace cannot long remain insensible to him," reasoned he, "and all I shall have to do will be to prevent an engagement until she attains the age of twenty. Time will fly so swiftly that they will hardly heed his presence."

The evenings were employed sometimes in music; sometimes, de Courcy, or the Doctor, read aloud. The former was thus employed, one evening, and had chosen, at Grace's desire, some of the beautiful sonnets of Petrarch: unrivalled, certainly, in any language for elegance of expression, depth of thought, poetical feeling and

imagery. He had just commenced the divine Canzone—

"Perchè la vita è breve."

when they were interrupted by the announcement of Mr. Strickland, who was immediately ushered in.

He had come to take leave, and to express his thanks for the many and continued kindnesses he had received from Dr. Shafton.

"But you know," observed the Doctor, that I do not like thanks, especially when undeserved, and I am sure that, in this case, all obligation has been mutual."

Strickland shook his head incredulously.

"When do you leave, Mr. Strickland?" asked de Courcy.

"To-morrow. I have already called on your lordship this morning, and intended to pay you an early visit before my departure."

"You shall not put yourself out of the way to do that," replied de Courcy, "as I was out, I must pay the penalty; but I shall ride over some day, and see how you get on in your new

residence, and whether everything is as it should be."

Strickland's eyes sparkled with delight and gratitude.

"And I suppose," remarked Grace, "you will soon take Mrs. Strickland home?"

"Indeed, Miss Shafton, I shall lose no time in doing so!"

"Well, I shall look for some cake! But, pray, Mr. Strickland, what are we to do without you?—what is to become of Papa's school, and all our little plans, in which you promised your assistance?"

"I leave everything in such excellent hands, my dear Miss Shafton, that, I must confess, I feel no compunction."

"Then, I can only say that you are very unconscionable."

"My sphere of usefulness," remarked Strickland, "was but confined; *yours* is unlimited; and, I know, you do not consider it a fatigue to administer to the comfort and happiness of others."

"All very fine," replied Grace laughing, "but, I suppose it is of no use to reproach you, we shall scarcely persuade you to stay amongst us?"

"And would not, if we could," said the Doctor, "but how is it we have seen so little of you lately?"

"I have been much engaged; and have, besides, had a friend staying with me, who is thinking of remaining in this neighbourhood. He was very pressing with me, for an introduction to you; but, knowing your love of retirement, I feared to intrude by bringing him."

"Any friend of yours," replied the Doctor, "would always be welcome."

"Thank you; then, perhaps, on his return, you will allow me to give him a letter of introduction?"

"Certainly! what is his name?"

"Talbot. He has several times endeavoured to serve me, and, though without success, I feel bound in gratitude for his exertions."

"Talbot;" said de Courcy, "the name is familiar to me; I think I have met him."

"I do not doubt it. He is of good family, and mixes in the best society.

It was late when Strickland took his leave.

"I shall regret," said the Doctor, "to enlarge my small circle; but I esteem Strickland, and did not like to give him a refusal."

"If," said de Courcy, "it is the Talbot I mean, he is not prepossessing. I remember, I felt rather a dislike to him, and never would make his acquaintance, though he made many advances."

"I am almost inclined, then, to withdraw my consent. Why did you not say as much?"

"It would not be fair; for, after all, my judgement has been formed principally from his countenance."

"I, also, am a physiognomist;" replied the Doctor, "and, though I would not allow it to prejudice my actions, I have seldom been deceived in my conclusions."

"Well," remarked de Courcy, as he bade them good night, "if I am right, you will not long cultivate Mr. Talbot's acquaintance."

CHAPTER V.

It was the eve of a beautiful day towards the latter end of May; but, though the birds had sung sweetly in the trees, and the sun shone brightly in the heavens, Grace Shafton had passed a long dull day: it had been unenlivened by the presence of him, who now, in her eyes, made all things appear bright. De Courcy had promised to be with them early, in order that they might enjoy a long ride together. The horse that Grace formerly rode, had, since its misdemeanour, been exchanged for one of de Courcy's so perfectly well broken and docile,

that no danger could be apprehended. The horses were, already, at the door. Grace, equipped for her ride, now looked from the window; now took a book; anon wandered back to the window; and, in fact, exhibited all those signs, generally allowed as, indicative of extreme impatience.

"We had better set off I think, Grace," said the Doctor quietly, for, to judge by your restlessness, you are quite tired of waiting."

"Oh, no, dear papa, not at all! I was only wondering what makes Lord de Courcy so late. It is quite half an hour past the time appointed."

"Something has detained him. We will give him another five minutes, and, then, ride slowly on: if he come, he will soon overtake us."

"He will, certainly, send, if he be unable to come," remarked Grace; and her eye continued to watch the hand on the dial. She was right in saying, that if de Courcy could not come, he would send, for, presently came Larry with a

she touches, God bless her! Then
n' what 'ill I be sayin' to the Mas-
race, to keep him from frettin'
shaddy?"

Lord de Courcy, that we shall be
see him, so soon as he is disen-
t we are much disappointed by
morning."

do, Miss Grace, an' sure, why
e matter o' the disappoint-
hat's mutual. 'But how-
'l enjoy the bit o' ride:
to shine upon you!
ve! and the bles-
e your ears—
ith you!"

he was that important letthers had come all of a heap upon him, poor gintleman, which must be attinded to this identical mornin'—and to see how his noble and deliberate countenance cleared up like a summer's sky when he flatthered himself with the delight of comin' this evenin', if you *would* be marciful enough and give him the permission."

Grace much amused, though a little embarrassed, by Larry's high flown salutation, took the flowers, and professed they were indeed very beautiful. Her cheek did, at this moment, without any exaggeration, quite rival the reddest of the roses. She rang, that no other hand but hers might have the office of consigning them to the beautiful porcelain vase, which, at her order, was brought for their reception; and, while her fair fingers were thus employed—

"Mother of purity! (soliloquized Larry, loud enough to be heard by Grace) how charmin'ly she puts the cratures o' flowers into the vase, jist, for all the world, as if she was their

sister, and was a-recommendin' affection an' unity to 'em. The varty goes out of her on every thing she touches, God bless her!" Then aloud. "An' what 'ill I be sayin' to the Masther, Miss Grace, to keep him from frettin' himself into a shaddy?"

"Oh, tell Lord de Courcy, that we shall be most happy to see him, so soon as he is disengaged; and that we are much disappointed by his absence this morning."

"An' that I'll do, Miss Grace, an' sure, why not? An' as for the matter o' the disappointment, I'm thinking that's mutual. But howsomdever, I trust you'll enjoy the bit o' ride: an' I pray the Heavens to shine upon you! an' the breezes to play about ye! and the blessin's o' the grateful poor to salute your ears—Good mornin', Miss Grace, an' joy be with you!"

"Thank you, Larry, thank you."

The Doctor, who had gone to give some order, which had been, previously, forgotten; now entered to see if Grace was ready. As he

mounted her on 'Ariel,' Larry still stood hat in hand, and, as they rode off, he discharged a volley of blessings and good wishes after them.

"Strange creature that Larry!" remarked Grace to her father. "His attachment to his master, appears to be so great, that he indentifies himself with him upon all occasions."

"It is a quality that I wish our English servants possessed in a higher degree."

"But, Larry seems such a strange mixture of shrewdness, drollery, and sentiment; his language is, at times, positively highly poetical."

"He is a true specimen of his countrymen; acute observation, joined to a vivid imagination and warm heart. When they come to have (which they will in time, by their marriages with the English) a little of the solidity of the Saxon, they will be one of the finest people living: and we, also, shall improve, by imbibing some of their warmer and more generous qualities."

Grace had never failed to be interested by

her father's conversation; but, to-day, it had not its usual attraction; for, the Doctor caught her several times answering inadvertently, and, when he dropped the conversation a long silence ensued.

"You are very absent to-day, Grace; I have thrice asked your opinion of this lovely prospect, and you have thrice answered, 'very true, papa'."

Grace blushed, laughed, and tried to excuse herself.

"I should, I confess, like to know what subject occupies your thoughts so deeply."

"I fear, dear sir, I could scarcely tell you, so must allow it to be called an idle one."

The Doctor thought he could give a guess at the subject which pre-occupied her mind, and the reflection gave him, also, food for thought. It was too late (and the Doctor acknowledged it to himself) to try and prevent danger. Confident, however, in de Courcy's honourable principles, he did not feel much alarm. If their

love were mutual, he had every reason to regard the prospect of such a union, as, in every way, calculated to make his child happy; and, when de Courcy should mention his wishes, it was only for the Doctor to beg a delay of another year, ere the subject was mentioned to Grace. All this was so simple, that the good Doctor felt scarcely any uneasiness. It was strange that he should have forgotten his own youthful days; forgotten that, when *he* loved, he sought his answer, not from the father of his beloved, but from herself; and would hear of the approval of his suit only from her own lips.

Grace endeavoured to make up for her former absence of mind by arousing herself, and joining her father in his remarks. As the day wore away she became more cheerful; and, as evening approached, her heart fluttered with a sensation she dared not enquire into. But the evening advanced, and was wearing away without bringing de Courcy. She had tried her harp, she had tried her voice, but neither harp nor

voice were in tune; and she silenced them in disgust. She took up a book, but, when she had arrived at the bottom of the page, she found that, although her eye had passed over it, her mind remained unconscious of its contents. Weary, ashamed of her restlessness, she went to the window, opened it, and stepped forth into the soft moonlight. It was a bright and lovely night; the long shadows of the trees fell upon the lawn, and the moon, unobscured by a single cloud, asserted her authority as queen of night. Grace turned to look at her father; he was absorbed by his book, and she walked forward unheeding whither. Arrived at the foot of an old and wide spreading oak, she stopped: it was a favourite resort, and she had had a seat placed there, to which she often took her book, or drawing materials. From hence, she could, in the broad daylight, descry the spot where de Courcy had rescued her from a fearful death. Her eyes followed their wonted direction, and it seemed as though the moon favoured her wishes, for she

had chosen that very spot to rest upon; and now her presence brightly illumined it.

Grace gazed for some time, and, if we may speak her soliloquy, it ran as follows. "Why should I be ashamed of feeling gratitude for one, who, at the risk of his own life, saved mine? of esteeming one, so good, so noble in thought and action? of having given *my* friendship to him, whom my father has singled out for *his* friend?—Yet, so it is!" She sighed softly, and her thoughts gradually fell into that dreamy sort of reverie, in which we are scarcely conscious of the subject that engrosses them. She was startled from her abstraction, by the sound of approaching footsteps, and, looking up, beheld de Courcy only a few paces from her. Her deep blush was lost in the pale moonlight; but an involuntary exclamation of surprise and pleasure had burst from her lips ere she was aware.

"I can scarcely believe my happiness," cried de Courcy, taking her hand. "Being detained

beyond my expectations, or wishes, I dared not intrude upon you at this late hour, and was trying to divert my disappointment by an outward view of the scene that has become so dear to me."

There was no daylight to reveal the changing cheek, but the voice trembled with emotion as Grace replied. "The night is so lovely that it has tempted me, almost unconsciously, hither. But my dear father will be delighted to see you; and will, I hope, scold you for being so near without the intention of coming in, which I can scarcely believe."

She would have moved on, but de Courcy took both her hands in his, and, with a gentle yet earnest tenderness of manner, detained her.

"Stay," he said, "stay! do not deprive me of the occasion I so earnestly wished for; let me enjoy this moment of happiness—to-morrow I shall be many miles distant from you."

"Distant!" and a feeling of desolation swept

over the heart of poor Grace. "Are you then about to leave us?"

"Yes; this morning, I received letters, which call me suddenly to London—but I cannot go until my fate is decided; it rests with you, dearest Grace, to make that decision;—to say whether my future prospects shall be bright—or dark as yonder threatening cloud that is rising to obscure the glory of the night. Yes, Grace, existence passed with you would, indeed, be one bright scene of happiness—Grace!" he repeated, for she was silent, "my happiness is in your hands."

"In my hands, in mine!" exclaimed Grace tremulously, "were it so, your lot should be bright—perfect,"—then pausing, she continued, "you know, you have a title to my gratitude; and of my esteem you have long been possessed."

"Gratitude, Grace! I would owe nothing to gratitude; and friendship is too cold a name to meet a love like mine. Why not say love, Grace? why not tell me, I cannot doubt your

love, and make me, by that declaration, the happiest of earth's creatures?"

"What can I say, my lord?" replied Grace, in a low and hesitating voice, and yet its soft sweet tones went to the heart of de Courcy. "A few moments since, and I would gladly have attributed the—too great interest I felt in you to gratitude; perhaps—I feared to look too closely into my heart, lest I should discover a—"

"A warmer feeling," and de Courcy pressed the unresisting hand to his lips. "And why *feared*, my Grace? Words were not wanting to tell my love."

We cannot say how long de Courcy would have taken to express his love; or to plunge into the future and paint the happiness in store for them:—but, fortunately, Grace remembered her father, for even de Courcy could not make her forget him.

"We forget," she said. "We forget that there is one to share, and confirm our happiness; my dear father knows not of my absence."

"True, dearest, we will go to him; and now that I am assured of your sentiments, I will ask his consent and blessing."

Drawing her arm through his, they proceeded towards the house; but, before they had advanced many steps, they were met by the Doctor, who, in some alarm, had come to seek Grace. He was not a little surprised at seeing de Courcy; but the Earl hastened to explain the cause of his appearance.

"And," said the doctor, "when you found this foolish girl, you should have instantly brought her back; for it is too late for her to be out, without either bonnet or shawl."

"I have, indeed, been to blame!" replied de Courcy anxiously, "and, in the selfish gratification of my own feelings, never gave it a thought."

The Doctor sighed, as he replied, "Youth seldom thinks of these things until some sad loss fixes them in the memory, never to be forgotten. Just such as she is, was her mother,

when a similar carelessness deprived me of her for ever."

De Courcy shuddered, and earnestly entreated Grace to be careful.

"I will make up for my former imprudence by going to bed, and taking care of myself," said Grace playfully; and, effecting her escape, she left de Courcy to make his suit known to her father.

"You have, you tell me, already made known your sentiments to Grace," said the Doctor.

"I have! I trust you do not blame me for having been anxious to ascertain her sentiments."

"No, I cannot blame you." For the Doctor recollected that he had done the same thing himself. "But"—and he was about to mention his promise to his wife, when the fear that de Courcy might think him actuated by superstition, checked him.

"But what, my dear Sir?"

"Grace is very young, and it has, always,

been my desire that she should not marry, nor even be engaged, until her twentieth year."

"My dear friend, you do not, I hope, mean it! Why she is not yet nineteen."

"Very nearly!"

"My dear Doctor, what consequence can it be, whether she be married at nineteen or twenty? Indeed, I will hear of no such cruel resolution! nay, I will not hear a word to-night; recollect, I am not going to take her any great distance from you, you will scarcely feel her loss, we are such near neighbours.

De Courcy then commenced a detail of his hopes, and his plans for the future; and, in all he said, showed such a devotion to his child, that the Doctor was touched. Still he felt a sadness, that would not be chased; and, at last, de Courcy observed it.

"You do not, I trust, fear to place your daughter's happiness in my keeping? Believe me, it will be the study of my life to promote it."

"On the contrary," replied the Doctor, "could I have chosen from the whole world, I should not have had such reason to be satisfied."

"Thank you; and now, good night! Be careful of my treasure; I hope soon to be back to claim it. In the mean time, I shall write: but I am resolved not to be detained above a week."

The Doctor, when left alone, was a prey to conflicting feelings. Angry with himself for not having explained exactly to de Courcy the promise by which he stood bound to his wife; he could not but feel that that promise was broken; and yet he had done all in his power to avoid it. Could she, who exacted it, now see the present circumstances, she would absolve him; for, to adhere strictly to the letter, and to have refused an implied engagement, would, in all probability, have forfeited her child's happiness altogether. The dread that hung over him was, he felt, foolish and superstitious; but, yet, it preserved its influence. As he passed his

child's room, in his progress towards his own, he felt an irresistible inclination to enter. He softly laid his hand on the handle of the door; it yielded to his touch, and he entered the chamber. The stillness was unbroken! Advancing towards the bed, he beheld the object of his care in the calm sweet sleep of innocence; her cheek was still flushed;—she was again listening to the accents of love, but a sweet smile played around her mouth. The Doctor thought she had never looked so like her mother, *and the likeness beamed on him in smiles.* Fearful of disturbing her slumbers, which were light as a summer breeze, he breathed a prayer for her welfare, and softly quitted the room.

CHAPTER VII.

In a Grosvenor Square boudoir, the elegant disposal of which, denoted both the taste and wealth of its mistress, sate a lady, who *appeared* to be perusing the pages of a book; which, from the style of binding that had been lavished upon it, Mr. Colburn or Mr. Bentley (we are really unable to say which) had not considered a very safe 'Spec'. We use the expression *appeared*, because, either from the insipidity of the author (a probable conjecture), or the wandering of the fair reader's thoughts, there was that in her manner which seemed to imply a

strong inclination to throw the material into the fire. But, these are suppositions, we will return to facts.

The lady's dress was in the best taste, and of the existing fashion; yet, not so strictly adhering to the latter, as to lose sight of 'the becoming.' It was arranged in accordance with the style of her very elegant figure, which it displayed to the very best advantage. Her beauty was of no common order; though, rather of that kind which expresses pride and command, than the softer attributes of the sex. Her slender foot, as well as the aristocratic chiselling of her features, sufficiently indicated her high birth; whilst her haughty bearing showed that she fully appreciated the distinction. Her age might be about five-and-twenty, perhaps not so much, but a life of fashionable dissipation had, already, destroyed the natural bloom of her cheek—to quell the lustre of her eye, would have required the 'dusk hand of death.' As it flashed from the book, before alluded to,

to the superb French time-piece, and, then, again to the book; an observer would have read in its glance, the evidence of a spirit fed with fiery feelings.

At last, fairly throwing the book from her, with a gesture of impatient vexation, she exclaimed, "Surely he will come! he cannot, he will not refuse a request so earnestly urged; even should this report prove true, which, for the honour of our house, I will not believe, he will still accede to my request." She rang a small silver bell, and, on the instant, a page, perfectly well appointed in the costume of the middle ages, who waited in the antichamber, made his appearance.

"Paolo," she asked, "is this stupid clock true to the time?"

"Yes, illustrissima, it is past ten."

The arched and haughty brows were contracting, when the sound of a carriage, and the loud peal of the knocker, announced the expected guest.

"Fly, Paolo, see if it be the Earl, and usher him up here instantly."

Another moment, and Lord de Courcy entered the room. "Welcome, Ernest, welcome, my dear brother!" exclaimed the lady, the frown vanishing and the whole countenance clearing into an expression of glad and apparently affectionate welcome. "I was beginning to be wroth, and wofully tired of my own company, which, I am not very much accustomed to; but, now, that you are come, I feel fully repaid."

De Courcy kissed the fair cheek presented to him, and as he looked on his sister with a feeling of affectionate pride said, "I am sorry so to have tasked your patience; but, surely, you ought to be on better terms with yourself than to be so soon wearied of your own company."

"I am on the very best terms with myself as long as I have any one to keep me so. But you forget, that, for the pleasure of receiving you, I have given up (at the least) half a dozen de-

lightful engagements. I hope your gratitude is unbounded."

"Not being able to appreciate the delights you have lost, I fear my gratitude will hardly equal your expectations; but, my dear Augusta, you could not have expected me much earlier, unless I had set off in the middle of the night."

"I only know I expected you, wished for you, and, in my impatience, I believe, I considered nothing else; but, talking of gratitude, 'tis I, now that I think of it, who ought to be grateful for your sacrifice in leaving the dull groves and cheerless magnificence of de Courcy Hall, to pass a short time in London, in the gayest part of the gay season."

"Is it possible, Augusta, that you can think the home of your childhood dull and cheerless? believe me, I totally differ from you in that opinion; and, if gratitude may be mentioned *between us*, have some claims on yours; for, it, certainly, is a sacrifice to leave the country at this season; and, so far from desiring to enter

into the gaieties of the gay season, nothing less than your urgent request, backed by the plea of important business, should have induced me to come to Town."

"Well, I am most amazingly grateful, and will study a speech for the occasion; only do not, pray, look so dreadfully grave; and, as for the home of my childhood, you forget, that I was such a mere child when I left it, that I have scarcely any recollection of it."

"But it has been the abode of your ancestors for generations, and, therefore, has some claim to your respect."

"Well, dear Ernest, and I have a most particular veneration for it, but, I must confess, at this season of the year, I cannot think it such a *great* sacrifice to come and see me; for, you must allow, that the society in the country is more than stupid."

"I consider it no sacrifice to come to see you, my dear sister; but you are again wrong; the society that I have mixed with, though

limited, (he might have said to one family) is far superior, in every way, to that to be met with in London. In fact, I detest the heartless mode of fashionable visiting from which you derive your principal amusement!"

The lady bit her lip, but, hiding her real vexation, she exclaimed, with a satirical laugh, "I cry your mercy! I must beg you to excuse my ignorance! I fancied the company of break-neck squires, and blundering parsons, whose acquaintance with life consists in the matter of a fox-hunt, followed by hard drinking: with their wives and daughters, red nosed, and red cheeked matrons and misses, who, when they have attended the county ball, and spent a season at some watering place, are considered perfectly initiated, was not, exactly, the society for a de Courcy. Why, Ernest," she continued, changing her bitterly sarcastic tone, as she looked upon his grave countenance, into one more resembling good humour, "they only

know that life is vitality; the mere capability of violent transition and excess."

"Perhaps, Augusta, the life you have described, more closely resembles your own, than you are aware. In the fashionable world, people seek amusement in violent excitement; so do they of the country: but, one is the excitement of vanity and ostentation, the other of field sports and intoxication. This latter vice I believe to be decreasing: but it is not in such society I have sought for, and found, friends."

"Well, well, let us drop the subject, for I see we shall not agree. You have become a perfect cynic."

De Courcy smiled. "Come," he said, "let me hear what this important business is, that makes my presence so necessary."

"Talk not of business to-night; I am not in the mood! Besides, what have I been thinking of? You must take some refreshment."

"A cup of coffee, and let me take it here with you. I suppose the Duke is not at home."

"At home! good heavens! do you think anything would induce him to spend an evening *tête-à-tête*, with his wife?"

"Indeed I should have considered it an enjoyment worthy of his ambition."

"I am extremely glad that he is not of your way of thinking: I should have found him an excessive bore."

"Fie, I am sorry to hear you say so!"

"What," said the Duchess, laughing, "you would wish to see me playing the domestic and affectionate wife."

"Trust me, my sister, when I marry, it shall not be to endow, with my title and fortune, one who will value me only on their account; it shall not be to have a wife who, careless of my society, seeks her amusements abroad; who will listen to any trifler in preference to the man she has sworn to love and honour."

"And *obey*; now, pray, say obey, Ernest, that comes next: your discourse, which I confess to be excellent and highly edifying, is not perfect without it. However," she added more

gravely, "with all my faults, I have sufficient pride in my brother to think his society is never likely to become indifferent, *even* to his wife—but now, just fancy me and the Duke sitting *tête-à-tête*. It would be—'Is your grace pleased with the last new carriage horses, I bought for you? I flatter myself I have some knowledge and taste in horses!'—then, I should yawn an assent; then, he would ask my grace if I was pleased with the last new service of plate; with another encomium on his own taste; and my grace would give another yawn; then his grace would be at a loss to continue the conversation, and, after half a dozen efforts, would fall fast asleep; and I—should heartily wish his grace at his club, or any where else, where his merits and dignity would be duly appreciated."

"Had I been near you at the time, you should never have been united to one so little suited to make you happy!"

"Nonsense, Ernest; we get on extremely well together, and I am happy enough; I enjoy

my liberty, and, as for marrying for *love* and domestic felicity, we will leave all that nonsense to the *canaille;* we, I trust, have higher ideas and feelings than to be amused with such dreams."

"Higher ideas! higher feelings. Good God! Augusta, what is there of feeling or elevation in the life you are now living? My dear sister, where is your excellent understanding? where is your heart, when you deceive yourself with false views? false, and utterly perversive of all true happiness!" and de Courcy, really moved, got up and hastily traversed the room, to the manifest danger of many a beautiful chinese idol, or or-molu table, covered with all sorts of expensive nick-nacks.

"Pshaw, Ernest! sit down; you have become quite intolerable: all the effect of that horrid country! I must, positively, school you into better manners; and if you reward my pains, I will find you a paragon of a wife; one that shall have all your utopian ideas about love and domestic happiness."

"In that matter I shall not trouble you, I will choose for myself."

"There breaks out the pride of your sex; but, do not be alarmed; I am not going to force a wife upon you; and can, without any fear, resign the task to you. Thank heaven, I have no dread of a de Courcy's forming a *mèsalliance!*"

"You need be under no apprehension on that score, certainly," replied de Courcy coldly, "I shall not be guilty of forming a *mèsalliance;* neither shall I sacrifice my happiness at the shrine of false pride. I would not," he added vehemently, "even were it necessary to build up the name and fortunes of my house; which I thank God it is not!"

The Duchess had sufficient tact to perceive the conversation was ill-timed; she, therefore, judiciously changed the subject: talked of Italy, which she declared, with the exception of London or Paris, was the only place to live in; and, in fine, played the amiable and the agreeable so well, that de Courcy retired with the

disagreeable impression of the former conversation *almost*, if not entirely, removed.

After he had retired, the Duchess sat, for some time, absorbed in reflections of no pleasing nature. De Courcy's character, though yielding in trifles, was, on all important matters, firm and decisive: this evening it had appeared remarkably so; and the Duchess feared that, not only was a report, she had just heard, of his having become enamoured of some country beauty without either title or fortune, true; but, from his decisive manner, that it would be difficult to change his determination. But, she was not a person to be easily induced to give up a once-formed resolution. "What!" she mentally ejaculated, "let my favorite scheme be thwarted by some stupid country Miss! It is not to be endured. No, my determination is as strong as his, and I will mould him to my purpose; or, if my influence fail, other means must be resorted to! I have given my word

that Georgiana shall be his wife, and my happiness depends upon its fulfilment!"

The Duchess de' Rinucci, only daughter of the late Earl de Courcy, had, during her father's residence in Italy, attracted the admiration of the duke. She was not of a nature to forego the satisfaction of possessing such a title, joined to wealth fully equal to the support of it. Young as she was, she had decided that marriage was a matter of mere *convenance*, and, therefore, although her heart had, already, been given to another; although the Duke had neither won her love nor her esteem, she did not hesitate to bestow upon him her hand and fortune.

A few years residence in Italy sufficed to convince her that she had formed a just estimate of the ties of marriage. And if she did not adopt the system of "Cavaliere Servente," it was not from any scruples of morality.

Upon her return to England, where the Duke had decided upon remaining a few years, she again met the lover of her youth; the only one

who had ever made an impression on her heart. She had, however, been deaf to its solicitations, as well as to those of her lover, because Lord Charles Fitzrook was a younger son. He loved her with the ardour of a first love, and, when the tidings of her marriage were brought to England, suffered all the bitter pangs of disappointed affection. She returned, and he studiously avoided her; but she was, everywhere, the courted, the reigning belle of the season. She was more beautiful than ever; and, as his eyes glanced sometimes towards the loved Augusta, he thought those of the Duchess did not avoid his gaze. Emboldened, he ventured to approach; he was not repulsed; he listened to the suppressed sigh; he pressed, unreproved, the soft hand: he was enthralled, he was again at her feet; but it was with feelings of grief, we would almost say, of shame (for he had truly and purely loved), that he found himself the favoured lover of the Duchess.

Was she happy? Can any woman be so,

who feels that she has incurred the contempt of the man she loves; who knows she has outraged her duties? But the Duchess did not, or would not, look upon it in that light; she believed she *was* happy! marriage, in her opinion, was the death of love; its very security palled, and occasioned satiety and disgust. Was then, the feverish state of constant excitement in which she lived, happiness? Her very actions decided against her. She was too conscious of her own beauty, and too proud, to be jealous; yet, she wished to draw the object of her affections nearer to her by some strong tie: what an inconsistency! the strongest she had despised and mocked. Suddenly, the idea of a union with de Courcy and the sister of her lover, struck her. Lady Georgiana was extremely pretty, and extremely childish; affecting an innocence of manner, and a *naïveté*, that imposed upon few; and, yet, the Duchess hoped that, with her powerful assistance, it would impose upon de Courcy. The plan, once thought upon, she

gently hinted to her lover. He was, evidently, gratified—he even confessed that he should feel proud of calling de Courcy brother; but, his haughty nature rebelled against any thing like manœuvring; and he expressly declared that nothing would so much displease him as any attempt of the kind. "If," he said, "Georgiana has sufficient attractions to please him, I shall be rejoiced; but—"

"Nay, I have no intention of using any *finesse*," interrupted the Duchess, "neither should I have thought about it; but, I fancied, that, the short time de Courcy was in Town, there appeared to be a mutual penchant: and, you know, it is my desire to promote the happiness of any one dear to you."

"De Courcy" replied Lord Fitzrook, "cannot fail of attracting the admiration of most women, at least of all capable of appreciating his noble character."

"Thank you, and, in return, I will say that I think Georgiana precisely adapted both

to engage his affections and to make him happy."

Lord Charles did not dissent; though he was far too penetrating really to agree with the Duchess. With his sister, he was well aware, the title and fortune of de Courcy had no small influence: but, with a sigh for the past, he thought, "women are all alike in that respect!"

"Then," said the Duchess artfully, for she knew his proud nature, "I am, at all events assured that you approve my wishes?"

"Oh, decidedly!" and the matter became, with the Duchess, a point upon which she had fixed her heart.

CHAPTER VII.

In the conclusion of our last chapter, we endeavoured to enlighten the reader as to the motives that induced the Duchess to summon de Courcy so suddenly to London. In order, however, to explain these more fully, we must introduce a new character to his notice.

One morning, as the Duchess was reflecting on the most likely way of winding her brother to her purpose, and racking her fertile invention for the best excuse to bring him to town, the drawing-room door was thrown open, and Mr. Talbot, announced. "Bore," muttered the

Duchess, "how could they think of admitting him?"

"Ah, Talbot, how do you do? I have not seen you for an age."

"It is indeed long, since I have had the happiness of beholding your Grace!" returned Mr. Talbot, in a tone which he meant to be soft and insinuating, but which, to a nice ear, would have savoured of cringing. "Your Grace looks more charming than ever."

"Oh, no doubt, I do," returned the Duchess and a slight smile of contempt curled her haughty lip.

"And the Duke, I trust is well?"

"I believe, perfectly so," yawned her Grace, "but, may I take the liberty of an old friend, and ask you to call some other time, for, really, this morning I have letters of importance to write, and the carriage is already at the door? I know you will excuse me!"

"Oh, certainly!" said Mr. Talbot rising, and a smile of a peculiar expression, we would al-

most say, *disfigured* his cold and remarkably unprepossessing countenance. "I called merely to congratulate your Grace on the important coming event!"

"What event, my dear sir? nothing, I'm sure, very interesting to me; for I cannot even divine what you mean."

"I should have imagined it one of peculiar interest to your Grace, since it relates to Lord de Courcy:—but, I beg a thousand pardons for detaining your Grace; good morning!"

"Nay, my dear sir, pray sit down, I am in no such *very* great hurry; and should like to know what this *important* event is, to which you allude."

"Is it possible that your Grace is ignorant of Lord de Courcy's intended marriage?"

"Intended marriage! oh, my dear sir, this is too ridiculous! some absurd report, I assure you, totally without foundation."

Mr. Talbot smiled a most provoking smile; it plainly said, "I know that, that I am talk-

ing about, to be true, and you will find it so to your chagrin," but the voice merely gave utterance to a slight, "Possibly! but, I have just returned from that immediate neighbourhood, and am, therefore, a pretty good judge of the truth or falsehood of such a report."

"It is not very likely that *I* should be the last person informed of such an event."

Again Mr. Talbot smiled, and replied, "Why, it does appear so, no doubt; but, when I consider *all* the circumstances, I am, I confess, not very much surprised that his lordship has not been in haste to communicate the affair to your Grace."

"Really, you speak in riddles! I am quite at a loss to understand you."

"Well, I will not detain your Grace:—some other morning I—"

"No! positively, you shall not go. Come, there is no hurry; and I must hear all about this; so, sit down and tell me."

"Well, if your Grace will have it so!" and

Mr. Talbot again took his seat. He had gained his point; but he was well assured that he *should* gain it, and only laughed at the indifference with which the Duchess had, at first, treated him.

"Not at home to any one," said the Duchess ringing the bell. "And now, my dear Talbot, let me have really the truth."

"Decidedly the truth! well then, to my certain knowledge, Lord de Courcy is, if not positively engaged, at least on the eve of being so to a young lady, who is, certainly, very pretty, but, in my opinion, a *leetle* below the Earl's pretensions."

"And what proof have you of the truth of this?"

"I can witness for his constant devotion; his whole time is passed in her society; and when unable to be with her as early as usual, a servant is despatched with flowers and messages. In fact, between ourselves, there is no doubt of it!"

"And who is she?"

"Why her father is a Dr. Shafton."

"Dr. Shafton!" screamed the Duchess, "you do not mean to tell me that Lord de Courcy—that *my* brother would demean himself by marrying the daughter of a *Doctor?*"

Mr. Talbot might, easily, have quieted her Grace's scruples on this head, by informing her that Dr. Shafton, although he had been in the medical profession, was, nevertheless, of excellent family; and now, in possession of a fine estate and large property: but, it did not suit his purpose; neither would it have suited that of the Duchess to look upon any union, which her brother might desire to form, with other feelings than those of disgust and displeasure. Mr. Talbot, therefore, in reply to her exclamation, merely shook his head, and said, "it was too true!"

The Duchess remained, for a few moments, silent: then, said, "Trust me, de Courcy is only amusing himself a little."

"From all I know of him, he is, scarcely, the man to do that!"

"Well, I have not heard of it, and, I think, *that* is sufficient contradiction. I expect de Courcy in town shortly, and shall then learn the truth; and, in the mean time, must beg of you, my dear friend, not to spread the report; for trust me, it will never come to any thing."

"Not," thought Talbot, "if you can help it!" and having gained his point, he took his leave, assuring the Duchess she might depend upon his silence.

There was no time to be lost; so the Duchess instantly despatched the letter which brought de Courcy to town. Although before Talbot, she had affected to doubt the truth of the report, she had yet great apprehension in her own mind of its possibility. De Courcy's ardent and romantic nature was precisely calculated to lead him into an attachment of that sort. When he arrived, her fears were more than confirmed. She knew, at once, from the deci-

sion of his manner, that it would be vain to attempt to lay any open restraint on his inclination. "I must be wary," she said, "my plans must be well and deeply laid; nor must I be in haste! No, slowly and surely must I work—I want, however, the aid of some clever tool." She paused, "Talbot—he must have had some motive in bringing me the information! aye, he is the man for my purpose!—I must sound him! but where is he to be found? oh, that is easily ascertained."

The Duchess' first care was to get up some business, of sufficient importance, to detain de Courcy in town. Her next to throw him constantly into the society of the Fitzrooks. This was easily done, for the intimacy between the two families rendered their constant meeting a matter of mere every-day occurrence; and de Courcy suspected nothing.

He was, however, too penetrating, not to perceive that he had been summoned to town upon a mere pretence; but he attributed the

deceit to an amiable cause, (namely, the desire of obtaining his society for a short time); and, as he *was* there, did not like to check the warm and affectionate manner of his sister, by professing discontent. He sought an opportunity of conversing privately with her, in order to confide to her his engagement to Grace, and, consequently approaching nuptials, which he felt would sufficiently excuse a very short stay. But the Duchess perceived his desire, and avoided giving him the opportunity.

Parties were every day formed, in which de Courcy generally found himself by the side of Lady Georgiana. As the intimate friend of his sister, this was sufficiently natural; but his attentions never exceeded those of common politeness, and the Duchess remained, as far as ever from the attainment of her wishes.

Nearly a fortnight had elapsed. She began to despair. De Courcy was becoming, every day, more impatient to be gone; and she saw that to hope to detain him much longer would be vain.

"What can have become of this Talbot?" she exclaimed, one day, rising impatiently, from an unsatisfactory view of the subject, to ring the bell, "Did Mr. Talbot leave no card? or, who knows his address? I must have it instantly!"

"Mr. Talbot has called several times, your Grace, but, always, when orders had been given to admit only those who were on the list."

"How very provoking! Put him on the list immediately; and find me a card of his."

Half a dozen were soon laid before her, and she was just penning a billet, when, to save her farther trouble, Mr. Talbot himself was ushered in.

"How fortunate," said the Duchess, extending her hand, "I was writing to you, and have only just learned that my stupid people denied me when you called."

"I am delighted to have saved you the trouble of writing! In what can I be useful to your Grace?"

"Nay, it was merely to request you would

join our party at dinner to-day; though, I will confess, that I have wished, for some days, to have a little conversation with you."

Talbot bowed: his eyes were, for a moment, raised from the ground (where they habitually sought refuge, as though they desired their expression might be hidden from the penetrating) and they now gleamed with a momentary flash of satisfied malice. He had been surprised at not being earlier admitted, for, something whispered him, his services would be required.

After a short silence, during which the Duchess seemed at a loss how to commence the conversatian, she said—

"I fear, Talbot, there is *really* some truth,—*some* truth, I say,—in that odious report, which you were so kind as to communicate to me."

Mr. Talbot smiled.

"But, you know, as you so kindly and considerately remarked, "the match is very much beneath his pretensions.'"

"There can be no doubt of that!"

"And it really would be a lamentable thing for him to throw himself away upon a nobody; I assure you that I am quite distressed about it; quite affected!" and the Duchess *appeared* overcome with emotion.

"It must indeed be a great mortification to your Grace."

"But what is to be done, my dear Sir?—is there no way of preventing this disgrace?"

"I would do anything in my power to assist your Grace; if you could only point out in what way I can be useful; if you can only suggest."

"Ah, there's the difficulty! there's where I require your assistance; you know more of this affair than I do; more of these people; is there no report? nothing that can be got up to their discredit?"

The crafty Talbot pretended, for some minutes, to be buried in thought.

"Come, do, there's a good creature, think of something; I shall ever be bound to you, if you

can assist me to prevent this hateful marriage."

"Why, there is," answered Talbot, "there *is* a whisper,—but I cannot answer for its truth."

"What is it, what is it, my dear Talbot?"

"But even the possibility of such a thing's being true, would alarm the most courageous." continued Talbot, rendering his secret more imposing by a little procrastination.

"My dear friend, let me hear it: you know de Courcy is the soul of honour, and punctilious to a degree."

"Oh, there is nothing against the honour of either Dr. Shafton, or his daughter, but—"

"But?" echoed the Duchess impatiently.

"It seems that Dr. Shafton, after the death of his wife, though in the height of fame and practice, gave up his profession, and left the metropolis. Burying himself in the country, and avoiding all society, he devoted himself solely to the care of his daughter, whom he has immured as completely as if she had been

brought up in the walls of a convent."

"Well?"

"Well, it is whispered that his reason for this extraordinary seclusion (for, he, himself, was a man of social habits) is a fear that his daughter is somewhat touched with the complaint of her mother, who died insane," touching his forehead significantly.

"Good heavens! how shocking! how terrible!" exclaimed the Duchess, her eyes flashing with delight, "my dear Talbot, you must step in, and save de Courcy from so frightful a calamity, as this union would be!"

"Remember! I tell your Grace, *I cannot vouch for the truth of it!*"

"Truth," cried the Duchess contemptuously," "do you think such a report could have arisen without some foundation? It is true!" she continued vehemently. "It must be true, Talbot, it *shall* be true!"

Talbot bowed, and again his small and uncertain eyes glared with triumph. There was

a pause; Talbot saw that he was expected to speak.

"Then your Grace, would have me mention, quite inadvertently, this report to the Earl?"

"Exactly!"

"But, he will require satisfactory proofs, witnesses, &c."

"My dear, Talbot, surely you will find no difficulty in that part of the story; there must be plenty of old women in London, who for a sufficient bribe, will be glad to say any thing you bid them."

"A bright idea! a pretended nurse for instance?"

"The very thing! not that I would resort to such means, if I did not really believe in the truth of the report, which, from what you have told me, I see no reason to doubt. But, you know it is difficult to open the eyes of a lover; and—"

"And we must resort to a little stratagem. Yes, yes, I understand your Grace."

"Then, you will instantly prepare to put our plan in execution? there is not a moment to be lost; for de Courcy talks of leaving immediately."

"I will about it instantly, and I think I know the very agent, who for a *sufficient inducement* will answer our purpose; and who, with her husband's schooling, will act her part to perfection."

"Be careful that my name is not mentioned; for the rest, spare no expense."

"Leave it in my hands, I will take care of every thing!" and the amiable plotter on the peace and happiness of two happy and innocent beings, went exulting on his way.

Our readers will, no doubt, be desirous of learning why Mr. Talbot took so deep an interest in planning misery for two people whom he scarcely knew. We will proceed to gratify them.

John Champneys Talbot, was a man of good family. His fortune, never very extensive,

was, now, utterly ruined by his vices and extravagance. He resorted to the gaming table, not as a pastime, but as a profession; but, as yet, was not a sufficient adept to make it answer more than a comparative, not a positive, degree of respectability. Wearied of this uncertain state, and desirous of taking a more decided grade in society, he turned his thoughts towards matrimony. A rich heiress was a resource that would, at once, mend his shattered fortune, and place him in the coveted situation.

It happened that, during a visit in the neighbourhood of Meadlands, he heard of Miss Shafton. Beauty and wealth combined, were attractions too powerful to be overlooked. He saw her at church, and found that fame had not exaggerated; he determined on trying his fortune, but an unexpected obstacle came in his way; Dr. Shafton did not visit, and he knew no one who could give him an introduction. After various ineffectual efforts, he heard that Strickland visited in the family; he im-

mediately sought him, renewed an old college acquaintance with him, and won his heart by professions of friendship and pretended efforts to serve him. Just when he thought his plan accomplished, de Courcy's intimacy at Meadlands deprived him of all hope. To enter the lists against so formidable a rival, would be something akin to madness. He found the whole neighbourhood in commotion upon this unlooked for event. Every evil report, that the hearts of the malicious could suggest, was in circulation. Dr. Squeezetithe observed, with a grin, that "Dr. Shafton knew which side of his bread wanted butter;" and the Misses Squeezetithe wondered "he was not ashamed of encouraging the visits of a single man, after having refused those of all the respectable people in the neighbourhood." Mrs. Dunlevie, of Dunlevie House, whose daughters were considered the belles of the county, shook her head; pitied poor Miss Shafton; thought the Earl meant no good; and wished (poor thing!)

she had had a mother, "girls were never well brought up when deprived of one." Talbot set off for town determined upon frustrating this impending blow to his hopes. That he set about his plan *secumdum artem*, the reader has had an opportunity of judging; for the ultimate success of it, we must leave him to judge by the sequel of our story.

To the select party, that dined at the Duke de' Rinucci's, on the very identical day, a portion of which we have already recorded, Mr. Talbot was therefore added. The Duchess descended brilliant and triumphant. Several distinguished guests, amongst whom were the Fitzrooks, made up the party.

The Duchess made a point of introducing Talbot to the Earl; but his coldly polite bow did not promise much opportunity for conversation.

"That chance too often favours the designs of the wicked," is a proverb, that fully applies to the present case; for de Courcy had

determined that he would neither hand Lady Georgiana to dinner, nor be seated by her side. He began to feel that being placed in such continual contact with a young and pretty girl, might give rise to unfounded reports. In avoiding this, he became, by a singular chance, seated next to Talbot.

Mr. Talbot played his part admirably; and by his profound hypocrisy in affecting sentiments of which he knew the Earl approved, succeeded in drawing the latter's attention to his conversation. This he did so well, and so naturally, that de Courcy never for a moment suspected the snare that was laid for him. As he listened to his liberal and open sentiments, he fancied, that in forming so erroneous an opinion of his character he had deeply wronged him, and, to make amends for the supposed wrong, became polite and attentive.

The Duchess saw that Talbot had succeeded in attracting the Earl's attention, and in order to give him plenty of time for action, as well

as from a natural feeling of impatience, she retired rather early from the dinner table.

Upon reaching the drawing-room, the Duchess' first care was directed to her friend Lady Georgiana, over whose brow an angry cloud had gathered. Pouting and peevish, the pretty spoiled coquette threw herself upon a sofa, and half shutting her eyes, seemed to intimate that she would be approached by no one. The Duchess had no difficulty in guessing the cause; de Courcy had not attended the morning ride; he had not placed himself near her at dinner; he had been indifferent, scarcely paying the attentions common politeness required. At any other time, the Duchess would have been equally vexed, but in the expectation of the coming triumph, she bore patiently the present *apparent* downfall of her hopes. Lady Georgiana, not having these agreeable anticipations, was really deeply mortified at what she considered an intended neglect. She had

set her heart on de Courcy—she *fancied* that she actually loved him.

"My dear Georgiana," said the Duchess in her softest accents; "I wish to speak with you for a few moments; come into my boudoir."

"Can you excuse me, my dear? my head is so peculiarly painful, I can see nothing, hear nothing, and do nothing!"

"Come, you know you deserve to be scolded!"

"Lady Georgiana actually opened her eyes. "Your Grace really surprises me."

"*Your Grace*," repeated the Duchess, "Why Georgy, what is the matter? come, I must talk with you a little." And gently drawing her arm in hers, they entered the boudoir; where throwing herself in one of the satined recesses, and forcing the pouting girl to sit beside her, she said, "And now own that you have been very naughty."

"It is impossible that I can make such an

acknowledgement; for I am really unaware how I can deserve the accusation!"

The Duchess kissed the fair forehead of her friend, "*ma belle petite*, what, you will not confess? then, I must ask you what you have done to poor Ernest; he dares not approach you,—I have observed him during dinner, and he looks quite *au desespoir*; what has he done to offend?"

"Done!" exclaimed Lady Georgiana, the bitterness of her feelings now having vent, "nothing to offend *me*, I assure your Grace; he is perfectly indifferent to me, and I beg your Grace will not give yourself any trouble on that head; and, as for his looking like a despairing lover," and she laughed hysterically, "I cannot say, that *I* perceived it! beside, I must totally exonerate his lordship from ever having played the lover to me! no, to do him justice, he has always been perfectly indifferent, and I should never have imagined him likely to be otherwise, had not your Grace—"

"Go on Georgy, go on! you are inclined to

be unjust, so you may as well finish your speech by saying, 'had not your Grace assured me that he admired me!' And so I did, Georgy, and so I assure you still; but if you will flirt with others, I cannot be answerable for that. Fye, now you look the culprit: you cannot deny your long flirtation with d'Arcy, who, I am sure, is quite unworthy of you."

"I did not flirt," said the conscious Georgiana, "until—"

"I always told you, my dear Georgy, that de Courcy was not a man to be trifled with; you were talking to d'Arcy when he entered the room before dinner, and he observed it and kept aloof; then, your violent flirtation during dinner, was sufficiently observable to every eye."

"I do not believe de Courcy knows whether I flirted or not. *I* observed also, and it seemed to me that what I said or did was a matter of perfect indifference to him."

"Because, *ma belle*," in a coaxing tone, "you are too innocent to see into the *pretence* of indifference; and, trust me, it *was* all pretence.

I tell you Ernest loves you; or, at any rate, is deeply smitten with you; but, as I told you before, if you play off any of your flirtations, under the idea of exciting his jealousy, you will lose him: he must believe you all innocence, all love, all purity."

"Lose him! I have never won him yet; at least, I have no reason to believe that I have."

"*I* have a thousand! But he is not a man to be easily won, and will narrowly observe your character, before he allows himself to give way to the admiration, which, I am sure, you have excited."

Lady Georgiana's countenance had cleared, but there was still a shade remaining.

"Why, then," she asked, "if he really admire me, did he neglect to come this morning, as he was invited to do; and why, above all, offer his arm to that stick Lady Selina?"

"Well, at any rate, you cannot be jealous of *her*. But, I tell you, you have brought all this on yourself; because he disappointed you in the morning, you pouted and talked to d'Arcy, as

he approached, when you should have been all smiles. He is a strange romantic creature, and not to be treated like the generality of men."

"That is the very reason I like him! he is so unlike all our fashionable beaux; with none of their every-day speeches and heartless flattery."

"There now, if he could but have heard that delightfully-romantic speech, your conquest would be secure—he would be at your feet in an instant."

What the Americans call a "small smile," began to play around the mouth of the half convinced Georgiana; the Duchess saw it, and following up her advantage, "come, *mia cara*," she said, "clear that brow, and smile upon him when he appears: frowns do not become you."

Lady Georgiana's countenance began to assume its natural expression, which was that of good-humoured and satisfied vanity. She rose, and went to the glass to adjust the fair silken tresses that fell about her neck and throat in prodigal profusion. There was nothing in the

reflection of the mirror that induced despair. She was delicately formed, and her figure perfectly well proportioned, but so *petite*, that it gave no idea of dignity. Her features were finely moulded, and her complexion delicately fair; but there was no mind to shine forth in the former, or to change the hue of the latter. She was, in every respect, entitled to the epithet, '*une belle blonde.*' A soft, artificially-languid expression of feature, was frequently exchanged for the playful, yet equally affected vivacity of the child. Now, she would prettily pout—now, eagerly, almost foolishly, smile. She was never real, never dignified. As the Duchess, with a feeling somewhat bordering on contempt, observed her while she tried her curls in all their various positions, she could not help confessing that such was not the woman calculated to win the heart of de Courcy, "well," thought she, "let her but win his hand: for the rest I care not!"

The two friends re-entered the drawing

room; Lady Georgiana now beaming with smiles, and feeling as secure of conquest as she had, previously, been cast down and hopeless.

The gentlemen began to make their appearance; but no de Courcy. The Duchess grew anxious: at last Talbot came. He took an early opportunity of approaching the Duchess' chair, and, leaning over it, whispered.

"It is done!"

"And the effect?" asked the Duchess in a suppressed tone.

"Startling, terrible! at first, he laughed horribly; then, thanked me for my pains, with the cool contempt that threatened to overturn our hopes; but I played well—made him believe I was not at all anxious whether he gave credit to the report or not—spoke of it as a matter of indifference to myself, and, of course, equally so to him—then, mentioned that I happened to know the nurse who had attended on Mrs. Shafton. This had its effect; he turned white; his lip quivered; he asked me if he might take the liberty of enquiring the address;—I

gave it, with the name annexed: he then apologised for his former rudeness, started from the table, and, I believe, has left the house."

"Then, he will not join us?"

"I should say not!"

"Provoking! I wish him here to night; I must have him sought; he may have retired only to his own room."

"If you will be guided by me, you will not do so. What would you have of him in the present state of his mind? I tell you, he is not fit for society at present;—have patience, you must let the tide of passion ebb! You must let conviction stare him in the face! then, when the fit is over, you may mould him to your purpose;—at present, you might as well try to fetter a hurricane."

"I believe you are right; yes, it will not do to hurry matters. And now," she inwardly ejaculated, "for some excuse to this fair fool, who, without my help, would have as much chance of winning such a husband, as I should

of inspiring my wise Lord with any other passion than his cold and selfish vanity."

Drawing near to Lady Georgiana, "See," she said, "I was right! your flirtation with d'Arcy, has done all the mischief I expected. Talbot tells me, that de Courcy almost quarrelled with him for the merest trifle; and, I fear, he will not join us here; but never fear," perceiving the alarm her words had excited, "one thing is poz, that he is seriously attached to you; and I will try and put matters right to-morrow; but, remember, no more flirting!"

Lady Georgiana pouted, sighed, and would, any where else, have tried her powers at a sentimental sob, or so; but, here, it would have availed her nothing. Patience was the sole remedy; patience, that most difficult of all necessities to a person unaccustomed to the slightest contradiction. She promised herself however ample retaliation when once she should have fixed the culprit.

The reader must imagine de Courcy's feel-

ings upon receiving the information, which Talbot took such care to give him—we cannot describe them. Arrived in his own apartment, he paced to and fro with rapid and unequal strides: a restless anxiety to know the truth fevered him. Late as it was, he would have called upon the person, indicated by Talbot as having attended upon Mrs. Shafton; but her dwelling was in the outskirts of the metropolis, and, at so late an hour, would be closed for the night. To await till morning in this dreadful uncertainty, was horrible; but it would be still more horrible to hear that uncertainty confirmed, and his worst fears made certain. He thought of the Doctor's venerable appearance, and candid manners; of Grace's cultivated intellect, even disposition, and studious habits; and his hopes rose. But then came the recollection of the almost mysterious seclusion in which the Doctor had brought her up; his unwillingness to introduce her even to himself (which was at last brought about by his own

perseverance); and above all, when he made his proposal, the Doctor's evident sadness and desire of delay. "And can it be possible," he exclaimed, as these reflections influenced him, "that this gentle, this perfect, and gifted creature, carries the germ of that most evil malady, which must be entailed upon every generation?" He would, fain, have believed that the report originated in malice; but the idea fell to the ground, when he remembered that no one could at present know of his engagement to Grace, and could, therefore, have no interest in deceiving him. He had locked his door, and, upon Larry's knocking for permission to enter and attend upon his lordship, he answered, in a hoarse voice, that he should not require his attendance any more that night. Larry retired, marvelling what could have put his honour out so, and make him retire before half the company were gone,

Distracted by his thoughts, and incapable of banishing them, de Courcy flung himself on

his bed, impressed with the idea that a dreadful calamity hung over him. Towards morning he fell into a disturbed and unhealthy sleep. Visions of happiness, strangely blended with his present fears, floated in his imagination. He beheld Grace. lovely and peaceful as when he left her; she held out her arms to him, but when he would have embraced her, she was suddenly transformed into a shrieking maniac. Again he beheld her in her grave-clothes; her eyes were open, and their glance fixed steadily upon him. Without unfixing that glance, he thought, she arose out of the coffin, and slowly approached him. Her figure dilated into gigantic proportions; she wound him in the cold and clammy sere-cloth; her chilling hand circled his heart. He grasped the bed clothes; his breast heaved; his eyes opened and shut in that horrible reaction of consciousness; he uttered a low groan, and sprang up in the bed. "Thank God, thank God," he cried, "it is but a dream! but a dream!"

CHAPTER VIII.

"WELL, I do' know what's takin' the masther out at sich a cock-shout hour in the mornin'; an' its mighty melancholy he is intirely; an' without a word of humour for a single christian cratur, God help us! surely, some infringement of his feelings is a-going on; an' may be it's a thrue lover's thrial they're a fixing upon him!—Throth, whoever's a doin' it will pull a piper's pillilu about their ears.—Amin, to make it sartain! But surely, there can be no rason why I shouldn't folly him in his meanderin', and watch over him, and tind upon him, ac-

cording to the nature of my agreement? Marcy on us, how he has slammed that sthreet dhoor! What a state of narvis agitation he must be in! May the powers of goodness keep their eyes upon him, and lade him out o' the thrack of danger! Here's afther him, like a hound, any how!"

So saying, the faithful creature cautiously 'enlarged himself into the open air,' and, seeing his master jump into a cab, he took the liberty of accommodating himself behind, taking the precaution to observe that there were no spikes there, however, as, he thought they would make an uncomfortable perch; and thus treated himself to a lift "unknownst to the driver and the droved."

After proceeding, for about an hour, at a most furious pace, the cabman reined in, and demanded the number of the house. Larry was startled by the sepulchral answer of de Courcy.

"Stop at number twelve."

"Here it is, your honour!"

Larry slid himself off, 'gently and without publicity,' as the celebrated Dr. B—— says, and invested himself in the door-way of a neighbouring public house.

The cab-driver, having knocked at the door of No. 12, it was opened by a tidy looking girl.

"I want Mrs. Mac Walker," shouted the cabman.

"She aint stirring yet," screamed the girl.

"Tell her to look sharp then, immediately, here's a gentleman on *h*urgent business to her, and must, and shall, see her instanter."

The girl vanished for a couple of seconds, and then returned to announce that 'Mrs. Mac Walker was just ready to see the gentleman if he'd be so obleeging as to walk up.'

"Id' know," soliloquized Larry, in his retirement, "if I could do a bit o' courting with that astonished looking famale, and so insconce myself in the house on the strength of a bit of burning blarney? I'll make a thrial any how." He rowled up to the girl, with the air of an old

acquaintance, and smothering his voice to a sweet ear-witching tone, he began with—

"Bess, my love, how does the world use you, all this time?"

The girl gazed at him; and, struck with his appearance, smiled, blushed, and answered "very well, I thank you, Paddy."

"Why will you be calling me out o' my name, now? Well, what'll happen next? Think o'this, only think o'this now! my own mother's cousin's niece, and my removed relation, as it may be; and she don't extind the hand of friendship to me, nor so much as salute me with my original title, not to say nothin' about keepin' me here standin' in the cruel cowld. Good bye to ye Bessy! May the Lord forgive you this hardness of heart to one of your own kin! Your friends shall hear of it, be satisfied of that, or James Kendrick is not what he is!"

"Oh, James, don't go," said the simple girl mechanically taking the cue, and fancying the stranger a relation," don't go away; I was

bewildered a little, and couldn't bring your face to my recollection."

"Small blame to you," thought Larry. "And, now that you have brought it to your recollection, my love, may be you'd tell a person whether it looks too dangerous to sit opposite you, for the matther of half an hour, in the kitchen, for a bit of conversation; may be the danger would be pleasin', and pay for the risk."

"I'm not sure that the kitchen is tidy enough for you to sit in, James," returned the admiring girl.

"Oh, niver fear, Bessy! I'm too well used to all kinds o' quarters to be fistadious at this time o' day; and can make myself at home any where and everywhere!"

He then proceeded with her to the kitchen, politely lending his arm to help her down the stairs; and regularly bamboozling her with politeness. The girl's heart was opened by it, and Larry succeeded in learning all that she knew, and a trifle of what she did not know,

about Mrs. Mac Walker—and also Mr. Mac W., who was then on a Medical Tour in the provinces.

"Oh, then he's an M.D?" said Larry.

"No, not quite, but a great something-logicalist, I think it is; and a terrible writer of books. He writes for the great publisher in Holywell-street, Strand.

"Ah, hush, I see!" said Larry, "books of a sartin description. I'm thinking, then, he ain't the best christian a breathing. Does he go to church, chapel, or meetin', my dear?"

"He, he, he!" giggled Bess.

"What do you mane by he, he, he?" asked Larry, "I asked you if this Mac Walker went to a place o' sarvice, and you bust out a he, he, heing! Sure there isn't anything conthrary to common sense in my expression? What's the maning of it, at all, at all?"

"Why, bless your heart, he's a Hatheist."

"A what?" shrieked Larry.

"A Hatheist!" reiterated the girl.

"I niver heard tell o' such a cratur before."

said Larry. "They haven't one at the Zoological Gard'ns, I'm sure! How many legs has he? Has he got anything unnat'ral about him, eh?"

"No, nothink, *except his inclinations.*"

"Then, why do you call him a Hatheist?"

"'Cause he is one."

"And what, in the name o' the eleven millin vargins, do you mean?"

"Why, he's a Hatheist, 'cause he don't believe in any thing excepting nature; and he says that people always made themselves, just like the trees do; and that the ends of our legs and arms naturally rumify into toes and fingers, like the trunk and boughs of a tree into roots and little shoots."

"Ah, be asy!" said Larry, "he aint gone so far as that yet, is he?"

"Yes indeed, and I heard him confessing it all to another old fellow in a linsey-wolsey night-cap, who goes about building a flying hingine."

"You're a quizzing me, I'm thinkin', Bess!

First, you tells me a rig-ma-ree-story of a thing you call a Hatheist, and then you wind me up with a living Peter Wilkins! It won't do, agra, you're out in your reckoning ashthore, b'lieve me! I'm soft an' asy to affection, but divilish slack at ridicle. 'Back water' a bit, and tell us for true what this Mac Walker is, for somehow, that word Hatheist don't nat'rally apply to a thing on two legs. What were you thrying to say, when you delivered yourself of that unpopilar expression?"

"Well, I only repeated what I heard said to himself. It was of an evening when there was company with 'em, and 'twas a Sunday, and Mr. Mac Walker was saying how provoking it was to be obliged to listen to the church-bells ringing to evening service, and wishing he was in a land where the people wasn't such fools as to believe in religion. (Here Larry crossed himself devoutly,) and then a young man, whom he was teaching 'Freedom,' as he calls it, said 'So then, Mr. Mac Walker, you mean to say

that you are a Hatheist?' and Mr. Mac Walker said 'Yes,' looking very red in the forehead, and flushy-like in the cheeks; and when I asked our pot-boy what a Hatheist was, he said he couldn't exactly say, but he'd find out for me; and in a day or two, he brought me word that it meant a person as didn't consider there was any necessity for a God. And he told me he learned it from one of their customers at the Crown, who was a 'Socialist."

"Oh, holy mother! and so this Mac Walker don't believe in the catekism? And what is Mrs. Mac Walker?"

"Oh, she's anythink Mr. Mac Walker wants her to be! and, between ourselves, she's capable of doing anythink he tells her, except leaving off taking a drop of gin on the sly."

"And she's a Hatheiss I supposes?" asked Larry.

"To be sure she is. She hates churches, meeting-houses and chapels of every description."

Larry crossed himself a dozen times over,

"I am all in a paspiration," he said, "with what you tell me. And do you mane to remain in the house with sich hathens?"

"Why what harm will it do me?"

"Harum, why only dhrag you, and every other sowl into the vartex of damnation, that's a making itself sufficiently red hot for 'em."

"Oh, for shame!"

"What, for shame? Isn't it a shame, and a sin to boot, that a christian 'oman like yourself, condescinds to lose your charàcter, here and hereafter, by living in the same tabernacle with such limbs o' sattan? Powers above! what a world it is! But where does this unholy agint come from?"

"From Scotland!"

"Ah, and of coorse he's a Scotchman! That accounts for it! Go on, tell me something else about him. Has he done much harm in the neighbourhood?"

"He invites any person that has money, and never stops till, by some strange manœuvering,

he lets 'em out empty. He has stript a poor gentleman of the name of Co'main, of all his little property, and left him, his wife and five children to starve, or go to the workhouse."

"God requite him! God requite him!" cried Larry fervently. "But hist! sure there's some one a-comin' down the sthairs! may be it's himself. Let me out the airy doore, darling, for I wouldn't thrust myself in his prisince for all the goold in the bank."

It was in vain that Bess assured him that it was the gentleman who had called on Mrs. Mc Walker; Larry insisted upon departing. "You aint sure! sure I see you aint sure! and, if it should be him, I should faint away straight. Let me out, Bessy," and, as he emerged into the air, he hastily promised to come and see Bess soon again; entreating her, in the meanwhile, to learn all that she could about the Mc Walkers. "And by the way," he continued, as if it had just occurred to him, "I shouldn't mind knowing what that gentleman

wanted just now with her, if it was only to put him on his guard."

Bess promised to have a budget of news for him against his next visit; and, after a squeeze of the hand, and an application of the moulders of speech—which, under the circumstances, even Jessy might afford to forgive; the last of the Monaghans tore himself from his "remove cousin."

CHAPTER IX.

TIME passed heavily with Grace; but t
frequent letters of de Courcy were a source
enjoyment, that, in some measure, compensat
for his absence. The post hour was the o
now looked forward to, as concentrating t
whole portion of happiness which the d
afforded. Each letter was fonder, dearer, th
the last. At last came one which spoke of h
determination to return; he could not fix t
precise day; but he had decided that nothi
should detain him beyond a few days. Grac
heart bounded with joy.

"No letter!" sighed Grace, the next morning, as the post hour passed. Then the thought that, perhaps, her lover was even then on the road, brought a brighter colour to her cheek. But the day passed, and the morrow came, and again no letter.

"Most likely he waits to fix a day for his departure," said the Doctor, observing her inquietude.

She assented with a saddened countenance.

Day after day lingeringly passed; each morning bringing the hope that was to be wrecked ere evening. Grace began to feel all the sickness of soul that arises from ungratified anticipation; the Doctor, himself, felt surprised; and as he looked at the pale and anxious face of his child, could not but participate in her inquietude.

"If to-morrow bring no tidings," he said, "I will write."

The morrow came, and the Doctor fulfilled his determination of writing to de Courcy.

Grace, filled with an undefined dread, incapable of occupation, passed the day in restless idleness; and, towards evening, took her way to that spot, which was now doubly endeared to her. Here, had he told her his love; here, had the first intoxicating view of a life of bliss opened upon her. She sank upon the seat, and, folding her hands upon her bosom, gave the full rein to memory. She beheld him as he stood before her; she heard the soft, yet passionate pleadings, of his love; she felt the pressure of his hand, and then started to find herself alone, perhaps deserted. Tear after tear gathered in her eye, and rolled down her cheek, like drops of the thunder shower, from the cup of the lilly over its leaves, as with a voice of penetrating sadness, she murmured, "Ernest, dear, dear, Ernest."

A deep sigh responded to her half-whispered exclamation, and, in another moment, she was pressed in de Courcy's arms.

A torrent of sudden joy rushed to her heart,

almost overpowering in its effect: for a few moments, she was passive in his embrace; but, as de Courcy strained her with frantic energy to his bosom, she tried to recover herself, and gently, but firmly, disengaging herself, covered with tears and blushes, she raised her eyes to his face. As his arms untwined from her, he fell upon the seat, and Grace, for the first time, caught a view of his countenance.

"Good heavens!" she exclaimed, "you are ill, de Courcy; speak to me!—what has happened?—dear Ernest, speak to me!"

She waited an answer in vain, de Courcy looked up, but his eye was wild, his face haggard, and filled with mournful expression.

Grace laid her hand gently upon his, and the sweet tones of her voice fell upon his ear—"Dear Ernest, tell me; what is it that thus agitates you?"

"Misery, Grace, utter and forlorn misery!"

Grace's cheek grew suddenly pale; but the violence of de Courcy's emotion checked her grief and terror.

"Say not so," she exclaimed, "it shall not be; what misery can threaten you that I will not share? —what sorrow that I will not soothe?"

"No, Grace, you cannot share my misery; you cannot soothe my sorrow!"

Grace dropped the hand she had taken; for a moment, the quick sensitiveness of womanly pride recalled the blood to her cheek. She turned from him; and, yet, how leave him in the state of mental suffering under which he laboured. As she stood, her face half-averted, uncertain how to act, de Courcy continued.

"Mark me, Grace, turn not away, you cannot share my grief, my hopeless misery! but my love, like a consuming fire, will abide within me, and the canker worm of bitter disappointment will prey upon my heart, banishing hope and peace. Bereft of you, I shall wander on the face of the earth, reckless and miserable."

"And why bereft?" asked Grace, in a tone so low that it was scarcely audible.

"Why, aye, why?" cried he, starting up vehemently, and, taking hold of her arm, he held her at some distance from him, and scanned each lineament with a penetrating scrutiny. After a pause that appeared to Grace almost an eternity, he continued,—"God! can it be possible?" then, as Grace, half wild with terror, struggled to disengage herself, he exclaimed, "True, true, terribly true." and, relinquishing his hold again, he sank on the seat, and buried his face in his hands.

Affrighted, affected by his intense sorrow, Grace, of naturally strong mind, struggled for composure. By appearing herself calm, she hoped to succeed in allaying his agitation. After a stong effort, she said, in a firm voice.

"De Courcy, you are stangely disturbed, yet, whatever may be the cause, you well know that my father and myself will truly sympathise in your sorrow. Compose yourself, then, and come to him; perhaps, that which, to your fevered imagination, now appears insurmount-

able, may, with calmness and reflection, prove but a passing cloud."

He looked up at her as if, with a glance, he would penetrate her inmost thoughts; and her firmness and self-control restored him, in some measure, to composure.

"You are right, Grace! it is *I* who have acted the maniac! a cruel and heartless one: forgive me, forgive me, dearest! I will away, and, when I shake off this agony—for it is agony—I will see you."

"Nay, I entreat you not to go, until you have seen my father; he will soothe you, his advice will relieve—"

"Not now, Grace—not now—I cannot!—farewell, dearest—one kiss," and, pressing her to his heart in a long embrace, he rushed down the green slope, without once daring to turn round, as if he feared his courage would fail and that he should return.

After his departure, Grace stood mute and motionless; she wept not; she sighed not; her

very breathing seemed suspended. Even the approaching footsteps of her father did not arouse her; and finding his voice unheeded, it was not until taking her in his arms and calling loudly on her name, he succeeded in awaking the sufferer.

Aroused to a full sense of her sorrow, she threw her arms round the neck of her best and only friend, and a passion of tears relieved her oppressed heart. It was well they came to her relief, or perhaps, Talbot's base lie had been sadly verified.

The Doctor allowed her tears to exhaust themselves, then, supporting her back to the house, he laid her on the couch, and, seating himself beside her, awaited returning composure.

She did not stay his questioning, but, with a voice in which grief and emotion were struggling with her desire to be calm, she related the whole of her extraordinary interview with de Courcy; described his every look, and word;

and, when she had finished, fixed her eyes on her father to read his thoughts.

The Doctor was far more surprised and startled than he wished to avow. Grace, however, was not a child, to be lulled into tranquillity by false hopes; neither did he attempt to awake them. He confessed that he thought it a strange occurrence. He felt angry with de Courcy for trifling with his child's peace. '*He* had practised no deceit; knew of no obstacle; and, if any existed, it was on the Earl's side; it was not on his!'

Then, he reasoned with his child, as a fond, though just father—"even, my Grace," he said, "if it be the will of God, that this sore trial come upon you; remember, that it is not in this world we must fix our best hopes of happiness. Forget not your many blessings—your many duties; the father, whose only care you have been, for so many years; let him not see those cares and those hopes destroyed, by the first breath of disappointment."

With such and similar reasoning, did Dr. Shafton remind Grace of her duties, and she was too true a christian to refuse to listen to the voice of wisdom and affection.

When she retired to bed, it was with a hopeless, yet patient temper of mind.

"Bear up, my child!" was the Doctor's parting injunction, "all may yet be well. But do not too ardently fix your desires upon this hope; do not act as if life and its joys solely depended upon it."

"Oh, I have thought too much of him!" said the weeping Grace, "he usurped too large a portion of my affections; my duty to my God was even interrupted by thoughts of him. Yes, I placed my whole happiness upon him, and I am justly chastised."

"We are all sinners, my Grace; all weak and apt to err, and yours has been the involuntary error of an affectionate heart; recommend yourself to Him, who can temper us to bear—confide in Him, remembering that you are in His just hands."

Tenderly kissing her, he conducted her to the door of her chamber, and, telling Jessy that her lady would not want her that night, he retired to his own room, with an inward prayer, for his child's repose and peace.

When alone, and able to collect his thoughts, he was still more struck with the strangeness of the Earl's conduct. He had so narrowly observed de Courcy's character, that he could not believe him actuated by caprice. Unable to fathom the mystery, he determined to see the Earl, as early on the morrow as possible, and so endeavoured to compose his mind to rest.

At an early hour, the next morning, the Doctor set out for the hall; but, upon arriving there, great was his chagrin, to find that the Earl had departed by day-break.

"My lord, left a letter for you, sir," said Mr. Tomkins, the steward, who bustled forward upon hearing Dr. Shafton's voice: "and I have forwarded it to Meadlands, not five minutes since."

"Thank you, thank you," replied the Doctor,

"I did not think his lordship would have been off so early," and, unwilling that the inquisitive steward should read his vexation, he turned to retrace his steps. A feeling of extreme indignation took possession of him, at, what seemed to him, the Earl's unwarrantable conduct; but he endeavoured to be patient, and reserve his judgment for the explanation that the letter, no doubt, contained.

Grace, at her father's request, had gone to the village. He knew that in her state of mind, occupation was the most salutary thing, and gave her several commissions to the poor and sick, whom he had taken under his own care.

He hastened to the library, the letter of de Courcy was lying upon the table; impatiently he tore it open, and, as he read the contents, could scarcely believe the evidence of his senses.

"Mad," ejaculated the Doctor, "*he* is either *mad* himself, or has been grossly imposed on;

or, repenting his precipitancy, he wishes to get rid of his engagement, and has—but no, no, I do him an injustice, a great injustice!" and the Doctor paused in utter perplexity. Again he perused the letter! it bore the stamp of truth, and expressed grief and intense feeling. De Courcy reproached him for not having warned him of a circumstance of such vital importance: "why," he wrote, "did you, who, from the first, must have seen my admiration of your daughter, allow me to fix my whole affections upon her, when you knew that the dictates of humanity forbade her to become a wife? So great," he continued, "is my love for her, that I could take her to my arms, and spend my life in watching over, and endeavouring to prevent the breaking out of the fearful malady—but, to entail such a calamity on my race, to know that I doom my children to such a fate—I dare not! I go hence," he wrote in conclusion, "a miserable wanderer! carrying with me the image of her whom I can never possess, and

deceived by one whom I had learned so highly to esteem!"

"And richly should I deserve the loss of that esteem!" said the Doctor, "had I so acted; but this passes belief. Who could have taken the pains to invent such a vile falsehood? One so utterly devoid of foundation; and how can he be such an idiot as to give credit to it?"

Reflecting long upon this extraordinary subject, a new light broke in upon him. "Yes," he thought, "it must be so, the singular retirement in which I have lived, has given birth to this report." He knew that he had lost the good will of the neighbours, by this mode of life. He knew, also, enough of the world to be aware that, where people cannot find out the real cause for what they suppose to be a mystery, they will invent one.

His angry feelings towards de Courcy began to diminish; and, in lieu of them, he felt a pity for the sufferings which he was sure the belief in such a report must have occasioned. He still, however, greatly blamed him, for not

having instantly and personally communicated with himself. "But, I must and will see him!" was the Doctor's conclusion, and, as he arrived at this determination, Grace entered the room.

"You have not seen him, my father," said Grace, who observed the letter—"did he then shun you?"

"Not so, my dear child. The truth is, he has been abused; some one has taken infinite pains to make him believe a vile report; which, if true, would entirely explain and justify his conduct; but I must see him, for this matter shall be instantly cleared up."

"Do not, my father," replied Grace, her fine countenance lighting up with resentment, "for, if he would listen to the idle breath of slander—if it could change his love, he is not worthy of mine. What! instantly believe, as truth, that which, perhaps, one word would have sufficed to detect as falsehood."

"He has been greatly to blame," replied the Doctor, "but his letter speaks of witnesses and proofs, and—"

"Dear sir, he never loved! true love is confiding; it cannot doubt; it would not listen, though the whole world combined to calumniate the object. How I should have laughed to scorn any one, who would have insinuated aught against him!" and Grace turned away to conceal the indignant tear.

The Doctor was silent, he did not choose to explain the exact nature of the report; his medical experience forbad him, for he had often known real madness occasioned by the dread of it; and there was no knowing what impression such an idea might make on Grace's mind; he knew she was possessed of fortitude in an eminent degree, but, in this instance, he did not choose to test it.

Grace, not knowing the nature of the report —which, had she done, would have excused de Courcy greatly in her eyes—naturally thought her father's silence denoted acquiescence. Trying to smile, she said, "I shall soon resign myself! A little time, and I shall forget, and be what I was, before I knew him." Forget!

"Dear sir, he never loved! true love is non-fiding; it cannot doubt: it would not listen, though the whole world combined to calumniate the object. How I should have laughed to scorn any one, who would have insinuated aught against him!" and Grace turned away to conceal the indignant tear.

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she had yet to learn that a heart, like hers, was not formed to forget.

"For my own satisfaction, Grace," said the Doctor, "I have determined to see him; my character, my dignity requires that I should clear myself from the imputation of deceit."

"Then, dear sir, let me entreat you, that, on my part—"

"Fear not, Grace. I will see him! I will convince him he has wronged you, and still more deeply injured me: but, I shall not request a renewal of those addresses he has thought fit to withdraw; even, should he desire such a renewal. I will, (with your sanction) defer, for the present, such a design. It was always my wish that you should not enter into any engagement before you had arrived at your twentieth year, and I bitterly regret having deviated from my intention."

"I leave all in your hands, my father; you will, I know, act more wisely than I can dictate."

CHAPTER X.

We left the Duchess exulting in, what she considered, the success of her scheme. On the morning following that evening, which had brought the death blow to de Courcy's hopes of happiness, she sent Ma'mselle Manette to his lordship's apartment, to request that he would take his coffee in her dressing-room. Ma'amselle Manette returned with the information that his lordship was, already, out. Guessing the errand that had taken him, thus early, from home, the Duchess congratulated herself upon her in-

valuable ally; and passed the morning as the mornings of the fashionable and useless, are, generally, passed. She returned from her afternoon drive, only in time to dress for dinner.

"The Earl, has, of course, returned?" she said in a careless tone to Ma'amselle Manette.

Ma'amselle Manette put on an air of surprising mystery, "yes, your Grace, he has returned:—that is, his lordship did return, but—"

"But what?" impatiently asked the Duchess.

"He has gone out again, your Grace."

"Nothing very astonishing in that," replied the Duchess, in a displeased tone of voice.

"*Pas du tout!* not in the least, your Grace; his lordship left word, he hoped your Grace would excuse him for not waiting to take leave."

"Waiting to take leave? I do not understand! pray, speak so that I may know what you mean."

"Perhaps your Grace would like to see M. François, who is left behind to pack up the remainder of the things;" replied the nettled

Abigail; though, I believe, I perfectly understood his lordship's message."

"Do you mean to say Lord de Courcy has left town?"

"*Précisement*, your Grace; he begged me to say that business of great importance occasioned his immediate departure."

"And why did you not say so at first?" replied the Duchess, in a tone that did not admit of apology even from Mlle. Manette, whose great talents, in her avocation, had rendered her a special favorite with her lady.

There was a long silence, during which the working of the Duchess's features betrayed the rage and vexation that she inwardly suffered.

"Who has he left behind, do you say; Monaghan?"

"Oh no, your Grace, Mr. Monaghan is too great a favorite to be left behind; though, for my part, I see no reason why he should be. I'm sure he's not half so genteel a person as M. François."

"Is he attached to his lord?"

"Mr. Monaghan, your Grace? why he *pretends* to be immensely fond of his lordship, and takes care always to keep so near him that it is difficult for others, who are more deserving—"

"In fact, you are not upon good terms with him?"

"Why, as to terms, your Grace; he has been guilty of some little indecorums—in fact, he is not "*comme il faut.*"

"And François, is he much about his master?"

"*Assez bien*, your Grace, I doubt not, if it were not for Mr. Monaghan—"

"Never mind Mr. Monaghan; does his master trust him?"

"*Sans doute*, your Grace, *oh! mon Dieu, oui!*"

"And with him you are on good terms?"

"Why, your Grace, M. François is a Frenchman; he is my countryman, and *très poli*; and very *empressé* in his attentions to me."

"In short he makes love to you?"

"*Pardon*, your Grace, I assure your Grace that, except when I wished to get out of him the information your Grace was so desirous of obtaining, I never allowed him—"

"Pshaw, I am glad to hear he is on those terms with you! Of course he would serve you, and would not refuse to do anything that was for his master's interest?"

"*Refuser*, your Grace? why, if he refused to do anything your Grace commanded, he never need expect favour from me again."

"Right, Manette, right! I know that I may depend on your fidelity; and I have your interest at heart, and mean to promote it. Can you ensure François' silence?—will he be likely to talk to Monaghan?"

"No fear of that, your Grace!"

"Well, listen to a few directions I shall give you: make sure of François' fidelity in any way you think best; you know I am liberal to those who oblige me!"

The directions were given; and then, the

business of the toilette began, which proved one of uncommon difficulty, for rage and anger had so changed her Grace's complexion, that it needed all Mlle. Manette's skill to satisfy her lady with her appearance; and she was, at last, obliged to confess that, *positivement*, her Grace did not look quite so *charmante* as usual.

"Has any one arrived?" asked the Duchess of her page, as she prepared to descend.

"Mr. Talbot, your Grace."

She hurried forward, and hastened to communicate her fears and her chagrin.

"It is what was to be dreaded?" replied Mr. Talbot, but we cannot help it: we must leave something to chance! But, after all, I am not much alarmed; the woman I employed was well schooled, and worked so strongly on his feelings that the impression was terrible. He is in too excited a state to listen to reason; and if he should see Miss Shafton, or her father, a quarrel will, in all probability, ensue."

The Duchess shook her head. "I wish we

could be sure of that! On the other hand, if an explanation should take place, our scheme falls to the ground, and they become better friends than ever."

"It is true! but how could we avoid this?"

"If you had hinted to me the possibility of so sudden a departure, I would have found means to detain him."

"I scarcely supposed he would go without seeing you."

"Neither did I! Why did my evil stars prevail with me to go out before his return? Had I remained at home all would have been well."

"You know not the violence, the impetuosity of his passion; I doubt whether even your Grace could have detained him."

"I *would* have detained him!"

"Well, do not make yourself uneasy; *I* feel confident of success, and am not often deceived in my presentiments."

The entrance of fresh guests put an end to

the conversation; and soon after, the Duke, accompanied by Lord Charles, entered the room.

"How is this, *mia cara*," said the Duke, addressing his wife, "they tell me that de Courcy is gone? Surely, it is very sudden; he did not take leave even of *me*."

"Nor of me, either," replied the Duchess indifferently, "and of what consequence, when his absence extends only to a day or two, at the furthest?"

"Oh, is that all? well I thought he would not so soon break his chains," with a glance at Lord Charles.

The angry cloud appeared on the latter's brow; and the Duchess wished her judicious lord at the bottom of the sea. She took an early opportunity of approaching her lover; and said:—

"*Entre nous*, Georgiana would, contrary to my urgent advice, resort to flirting; she has carried the joke rather too far, and de Courcy has gone off in a fit of jealousy."

"I entirely differ with your Grace," he replied haughtily; "I have never observed any particular attention from the Earl towards my sister; and I think Georgiana perfectly right in studying no man's whims, until he has a right to expect it. I am happy to say she has no reason to court any one's attentions, and you must permit me to request, that no reports, injurious to my sister's future prospects, be allowed to get abroad."

"Nay, now you wrong me! I shall be absolutely offended with you. I know that Ernest has made no particular declaration; but the time would scarcely have warranted one. I, however, who pique myself on some penetration in these matters—"

"See what is not to be seen! But, excuse, me, *I*, also, have *observed*, and can acquit de Courcy of trifling; otherwise, he should answer it to me."

The Duchess would have replied, but her lover, turning quickly away, entered into con-

versation with Mrs. Somerville, a lady who had so many disposable daughters, that she looked with complaisance on the attentions of *even* a younger son.

Mortified and offended, the haughty Duchess could scarcely conceal her displeasure. Fortunately, the announcement of dinner came to her relief, and gave her time to recover herself.

It passed off heavily enough. The Duke was too much engrossed with his own dignity to give vent to entertaining ideas, even if he had any; which no one, who knew him, would ever accuse him of. His conversation pompous, and verbose, was fit only "*per concilliare il sonno*," as appeared evident, from the yawns that predominated at his end of the table. The Duchess *distrait*, and having no particular motive for exertion, left her guests to amuse themselves with the excellent and recherché dishes of M. le Blond, the Duke's cuisinier. They did ample justice to his merits; and truly this was not the first time that the Duke had been

indebted to the skill of this artist, for concealing his own inability to entertain his assembled guests.

To the Duchess the dinner seemed interminable: she longed to have an explanation with Lord Charles. She saw that his pride had taken the alarm, and that her chains sat loosely on him, and might be shaken off at the first touch. The idea was galling; to a fiery nature like hers, peculiarly so.

At last the time arrived, and the ladies retired, to indulge in scanning each other's appearance, and discuss the affairs and the merits of their dear friends.

In this delightful and edifying manner they passed the time, until the gentlemen made their appearance. Mrs. Somerville instanly seized upon Lord Charles, to give him a detailed account of the accomplishments of her eldest daughter. Talbot approached the Duchess.

"You are disquieted," he said; "but, the more I reflect, the less I fear. Had the Earl

waited till reason had had time to resume her empire, I should quake for the consequences; but, as it is, fear nothing! all will be as you wish!"

"I trust it may prove so," replied the Duchess, "but do, there's a good creature, just go and relieve Lord Charles from that tedious Mrs. Somerville; I want to send a message to his sister."

The obsequious Talbot moved to perform his mission; and Lord Charles, touched by the evident dejection of the Duchess, half repentant of his ill humour, and heartily sick of listening to the perfections of Miss Somerville, availed himself of the opportunity to seat himself by the Duchess.

The Duchess had soon the satisfaction of *believing* him as much her slave as ever; she moulded him to her wishes, and, as he could not doubt the *sincerity* of her intentions with regard to his sister, he had to request only prudence in their execution. The Duchess was

happy! she saw not that his love was on the wane; and that, though he could not throw off his chains, they had become heavy and cumbersome.

For many days, did the Duchess await the return of de Courcy, in anxious expectation: he came not—wrote not. The usual routine of opera, concerts and balls, went on; but she was restless and uneasy.

At last, wearied with suspense, and utterly at a loss to conjecture how matters had terminated, she determined to write; or—what if she paid him a visit? Yes, why had she not thought of it sooner? it would, decidedly, be the only way, by which she might hope to attain her ends. She was actually giving orders for her departure, when a letter was put into her hands. The writing was de Courcy's, and the post mark, foreign. She opened it eagerly: he had quitted England!

Rage and disappointment were her first feelings; her second, gratification, that, at any

rate, she had succeeded in seperating him from Miss Shafton. She lost, at present, the fruits of her deceit; but he would not remain abroad long, and, on his return, she could prosecute her plan for his union with Lady Georgiana; he would, then, have forgotten his former love, and success would be easy of attainment.

His letter was short; he apologised for his sudden departure; pleading in excuse, a severe disappointment which would, for some time, unfit him for society; especially English Society. He would, however, write more fully at a future opportunity.

The Duchess rang the bell, and commanded the attendance of Manette.

"How is this Manette?" she asked, as that person made her appearance. "How is this? Lord de Courcy has been in town, he is now in Paris, and yet we hear nothing of the matter; what, then, is Francois thinking about? Is it thus he answers the trust reposed in him?"

"In Paris, your Grace!" exclaimed Manette,

"then, I am sure François is not with him; nor has he been in town. He wrote to me only yesterday, from Delamere, where his lord had sent him on some business."

"'Tis probable, and he will, no doubt, see you before he proceeds to join his lordship."

"He is sure to do so, your Grace," and Manette, receiving no further commands, was about to retire.

"Let me know the moment he arrives: I have further orders for him."

"*Certainement, oui!* your Grace!" and Mlle. Manette *did* retire.

CHAPTER XI.

Dr. Shafton, as our readers will have anticipated, returned to Meadlands, without having attained the object of his journey. De Courcy's instant departure for the continent, prevented the possibility of his having an interview with him.

Before, however, he left the metropolis, he consigned to the hands of the earl's London agent, a letter, and requested him to forward it the earliest opportunity.

"My dearest father," said Grace, as she flew to meet him, after the *only* separation that had

ever occurred between them, "welcome, welcome home!"

The doctor pressed her in his arms, but he looked harrassed and disappointed.

"You need not tell me that your journey has been unsatisfactory; I read it in your countenance!"

"It has, indeed, Grace; I could not see the earl."

"No?" responded Grace, in much surprise.

"No, he has left England!"

Grace's cheek grew pale as marble:—"Well, be it so;" she said, "then, all is finished."

She remained some time silent: it was a hard struggle. She, then, said—

"My dear father, let this subject never be mentioned between us; let it be forgotten, as though the last few happy months had never been. I was happy before; I shall be so again; it was a dream: the awakening has been painful:—dear father, if, for a time, the remembrance of it should cloud my brow, and make

me less active in my duties, bear with me, and you shall see, I will soon be your own Grace again."

"Ah Grace, it is not so easy to forget, it will be long before you can do so; I wish you to exert your courage; to resign yourself to the will of *him*, who knows, far better than we do, what is good for us. But, I require you to put no unnecessary restraint upon your feelings; I want no forced cheerfulness. I am sure you will not give way to useless repining, and you will find that the cheerful performance of your daily duties, will restore a healthy state of mind, and bring with it that true cheerfulness, which is the result of the inward conviction of having done what we ought to do. But, this cannot be done all at once; it is natural that you should sorrow—let me share it with you."

Grace threw herself into her father's arms. "Sorrow," she exclaimed, "with such a friend! with such a father! Heaven grant I be not guilty of such ingratitude."

Weeks, months passed on, and, to an ordinary observer, no particular change would have been visible in Grace. But a father's watchful eye was not deceived ; it detected the gradual fading of the cheek ; the more taper proportions of the form ; the languor of her step, and the listless indifference which she, in vain, endeavoured to hide. She appeared to take a lively interest in all that passed around her ; but the Doctor, often observed, that her mind was absent. She smiled, but it was not the joyous smile of former times. She read, she conversed, she was ready to join in any study, or occupapation ; but, there was something wanting in all that she did ; the heart was not in it, or, if it were, a blight had fallen upon it, destroying all its hopes and energies.

Winter was far advanced, and the only circumstance that broke the usual routine of their life, was a visit from Strickland and his bride.

As the former talked of his happiness, could Grace forget him, who had been the means of be-

stowing it? As he spoke in glowing terms of de Courcy's attention—when he told of the wedding gift he had ordered for his wife—of the improvements he had desired to be made in his small vicarage, could she wholly banish from her thoughts him, who seemed so worthy to dwell in them?

Mr. and Mrs. Strickland staid but a few days, it was all the time Strickland could spare from his duties; and, after their departure, Dr. Shafton thought Grace more than usually dejected.

One day, as she was apparently busy over some new publications, having noticed the listless air with which she turned over the leaves, the Doctor said—

"You have, as yet, Grace, only seen the world in books; I intend you shall now peruse its living characters! It is time that you saw something of fashionable life—what the world calls good society—so we will spend the ensuing season in London.

"I thought, dear sir, you laughed at what the world said; and I have often heard you say, that nothing is so heartless as what is termed fashionable life."

"I say so still; but I wish you to judge for yourself."

"I will take your word for it, my dear sir."

"No, Grace, every one should see something of the world. I never intended that you should always live the life of a recluse; and I wish to see the effect a gay life will have upon you."

"Suppose I should turn out like Julia in the Hunchback, what would you say then?"

The Doctor laughed. "I have not much fear on that score; but, in case you should be prompted to play the fool, I will take care not to leave you entirely to your own guidance, and will reserve to myself the privilege of still acting as your friend and adviser."

"Well, that is some consolation; I am glad to hear you do not mean to expose me quite alone to the shoals and quicksands of a London life! But, believe me, dear papa, it will not

suit me; I am prepared to entertain a hearty contempt for all its follies."

"So much the better; I shall have less occasion to fulfil my office of censor."

"Then, imagine, what would a simple country maiden do amidst the high-bred fashionable belles: my rusticity would be their amusement?"

"Of that I have no fear; true grace and dignity are of the mind, and do not depend either on the airs that any French dancing master can give, or the postures obtained at the schools for calisthenics. No, when you have fitted yourself out at one of the most fashionable, and, consequently, most extravagant French milliners, you may be perfectly easy on that head."

"You are positively determined, then, that all my arguments are to be thrown away?"

"So much so, that I shall write immediately to my old and valued friend Mrs. Miles Stanhope, to look out for a house for us."

The letter was written, and, before the

Doctor could, possibly, have expected, an answer was returned. Mrs. Miles Stanhope wrote that she was charmed to hear of her old friend's somewhat tardy resolution; that she should not look out for a house, because she would not resign the pleasure of receiving them in hers. It is a pleasure, she said, I have long looked forward to, and you know I look upon your Grace as my own child; my arms were the first that received her, upon her entrance into the world: do not, then, make any excuse, but bring your daughter to console my loneliness. The gay season is approaching, and I shall enjoy introducing her into society.

"And," said the Doctor, as he finished reading the letter aloud to Grace; "in better hands you could not be; she mixes in the best society; keeps an elegant establishment; and, what you will prize above these, has an excellent heart."

"Then you mean to accept her invitation?"

"Certainly, for I know it is sincere, and I shall be glad to see you so well chaperoned."

"And we shall have no time to ourselves?"

"You must not expect much in a London life: but you will like Mrs. Stanhope; she is an amiable woman, very warm and sincere in her attachments, and, perhaps, altogether as violent where she takes a dislike; then, to do her justice, her penetration seldom deceives her, and, consequently, her dislikes extend only to the unworthy."

"She is a widow?"

"Yes, with a large jointure, and I know it does not all go in fashionable follies: she is liberal and open-handed."

"She *must* be something superior, or my dear father would not call her friend."

"None are exempt from failings, my child: I, at least, have never met with perfection. The purest ore is not without its mixture of alloy; and it is only by mixing in the world, that we can learn that mutual forbearance so necessary to promote happiness."

"You know best, my dear sir, but," and she

sighed, "I do not think I shall be happier for seeing the world."

"Both wiser and happier, Grace, if you look upon it with the eye of the philosopher. It is a strange truth, that to the wise, it increases wisdom, while, to the foolish, it is a blank page; and, often turns out a dangerous experiment."

"Thank you, dear papa, for classing me among the former."

Another fortnight, saw Grace and the Doctor established in the elegant residence of Mrs. Miles Stanhope in Hertford Street.

"Grace is indeed very beautiful!" said that lady, as as she was sitting with the Doctor, one morning, after breakfast; "even more beautiful than her mother; and, what is more extraordinary, her manners are highly distinguished, which I did not look for, in one brought up in such complete retirement—yes, very distinguished! She will make a sensation! I shall look for nothing less than a coronet for her."

"I do not thank you for thinking of dis-

posing of her; and, trust me, you will find a coronet will have no charms for Grace; she is too unambitious to further your views."

"To be sure she is; that is the very thing I admire in her. She is sweetly unconscious of her own beauty: were she ambitious and pretending, I should be the very first to thwart her pretensions."

"I readily believe you. But, still, you may spare yourself the pains of looking out a husband for her."

"Why, I hope you have not grown selfish, and wish to keep her all to yourself? Surely, you have too much good sense to wish her to remain single:—no, no, she must marry, and marry well."

"Happily!"

"Yes, of course, happily; is a coronet incompatible with happiness?"

The Doctor shook his head. "I believe happiness has often been sacrificed for its possession."

"No doubt, but that is not my plan."

"We will have no *plans*, my dear friend."

"You really have grown quite intolerable; that is the effect of having your own way so much; pray, allow me to build my castles in my own peculiar style of architecture, and do not, at once, undermine their foundation."

"And so upset their superstructure; well, for the future, I will only find out their defects, without entirely overturning them. With regard to Grace, I do not desire her to marry at present; but, if from motives of real affection, she were to desire it, I should certainly not oppose her wishes; provided that I approved her choice."

"And why should she not desire it, at her age, and with a disengaged heart; which I take for granted, not suspecting her to have fallen in love with anything more dangerous than a pet lamb?"

The entrance of Grace, put a stop to the conversation.

"Here, Grace," said Mrs. Stanhope, throwing towards her a quantity of notes and cards, "here is a sufficient choice of amusements, balls, concerts, conversazione's. With the utmost diligence, we cannot go to all; so, make your choice."

"*I* make my choice, dear Madam," said Grace, "woe to us, if I did: why, I am ignorant even of the names of the élite, and should, in all probality, fix on those least worthy of attention: no, I shall be too happy to abide by your decision."

"I believe you are right; but you will, soon be initiated into these mysteries. Come, let us see, a ball at Lord Middleton's: that, by all means, must be accepted; the Viscount, it is true, has not much to recommend him; pity he is not more interesting! The Winterville's at home! yes, they are good people: Lord Charles Fitzrook, is an elegant and very agreeable man; his sister fancies herself a beauty; but, not having a very large fortune, it does not seem to

be sufficiently appreciated: she is, already, poor thing, going through her third campaign. There was some talk, last season, of her being likely to catch Lord de Courcy; but I never believed it. *He* is, indeed, a superior being, but is, vexatiously, again on the continent."

It was fortunate that Mrs. Stanhope was too much engaged with her subject to notice the deadly paleness that overspread the face of Grace. Her father looked anxiously at her, and sighed as he observed her changing cheek.

"Ah, then, here is Mrs. Melody's concert."

"Oh, by all means, the concert!" cried the Doctor. "We are both passionately fond of music."

"That's unfortunate; it is the very reason why you should not go to Mrs. Melody's. That lady, although arrived at an age when the voices of most people lose their tone and power, still fancies herself a prima donna; consequently, always takes the *premier rôle*, at her own parties:

the frantic efforts she makes to support this undertaking, is too trying to the risible as well as auditory nerves of the spectators. The best of it is, that the older she grows, the more pertinacious she is of her powers; and the last time she called on me, though she must be approaching her seventieth era, she, with the most serious face in the world, told me that her voice was clearer and more powerful than ever."

The Doctor and Grace laughed heartily at the description given by their lively hostess.

"However," she continued, "her concert is fixed for an open night, so, if nothing more interesting intervenes, we will go; only, be sure not to show the least inclination to a smile, unless it be one of delight, for her husband, a grim old gentleman, who thinks his wife a St. Cecilia, stands sentinel while she exerts her vocal powers; and every one who misbehaves, is set down in the black book, to be retalliated upon, at the first favorable opportunity."

"But what is this immense and very gay affair, surrounded with masks, cupids, darts and satyrs?"

"Oh, that is the Fibspredders' masquerade. It will be a very gay thing, but *mixed*. The Fibspredders—some half dozen of brothers and sisters, who live together—are immensely rich. They see a great deal of company, but are not sufficiently select in their choice of it. The Miss Fibspredders spend their whole time in the agreeable occupation of slandering their friends and acquaintances; that is, all the time they can spare from the study of dress and decoration, in which they surpass everyone. You might, for instance, know their coach a mile off, so strongly does it resemble the Lord Mayor's on a day of procession; and, to make up for the diminutiveness of their figures, they take care to render them conspicuous, by decking them in the gaudiest of all gaudy rags."

"Pray," cried Grace, "let us avoid the Fib-

spredders. They are, by far, the most disagreeable of any you have yet described."

"Yes," replied Mrs. Stanhope, "a species of animal to be avoided certainly: but there are so few private masquerades—in fact, this is the only one at present announced—and you must see a masquerade; besides, we must show you the dark side, as well as the bright, of human nature: at present, you have seen only the latter."

"And I never wish to behold the former."

"I wish there was none to behold!" returned Mrs. Stanhope; "but, since there is, I am so inquisitive I like to take a peep at it."

"Well," asked the Doctor, "have you done, for the carriage has been at the door for this last hour?"

"True, I ordered it early that Grace might see Carson's new importations."

Grace was now whirled about in the vortex of dissipation. She was often amused with the

liveliness and knowledge of the world, displayed by her hostess, who seemed, daily, to grow more attached to her. Grace observed that, notwithstanding her continual contact with the heartless, she still preserved her natural warmth and sincerity. She admitted few to her house as real intimates; those few were well chosen.

CHAPTER XII.

"Now I must positively preside at your toilette myself, this evening," said Mrs. Stanhope to Grace, on the night of Lord Middleton's ball. "This is your first grand appearance in the world of fashion, and it must be *comme il faut.*"

Grace smiled at the importance her kind friend seemed to attach to what, in her eyes, was scarcely worth the pains; but she allowed her to have her own way.

The task was completed in much less time than Mrs. Stanhope had allowed; but, as she said afterwards to the Doctor, Grace was really

so lovely, that neither art nor pains were necessary in adorning her. As she gave the finishing touches, she gazed on her with almost a mother's pride.

Grace looked indeed beautiful. The air of sadness which, in spite of her efforts, was but too perceptible, gave a more elevated caste to her beauty, than it had possessed before her knowledge of de Courcy. She was then, the girl; she was now, the thinking, the noble woman. The excitement and flurry that Mrs. Stanhope had caused, in her anxiety about her dress, had given a heightened bloom to her cheek; and that dress, in the very best taste, and of the most costly materials, displayed her beauty to the greatest advantage.

The rooms were full, when our party entered; and Mrs. Stanhope soon found she was right in her conjecture, that Grace would make a sensation. A buzz of admiration followed her steps; and, embarrassed by the attention she excited, she entreated Mrs. Stanhope to retire

to a seat. Mrs. Stanhope complied, but was immediately surrounded by a crowd of beaux, all eager for an introduction to her beautiful friend.

"Dear Mrs. Stanhope," said a highly fashionable looking man, taking his place next her, with an air of great familiarity, "now, I know that you are going to make me the happy man, and allow me the honour of leading your fair friend to the dance."

"Miss Shafton has just expressed a disinclination to dance," replied Mrs. Stanhope, with a smile, that told Grace the intercessor for her hand was no small favorite; "but I will, with pleasure, introduce you, and you can try your powers of persuasion to induce her to alter her purpose."

Mr. Falkland instantly took the vacant seat by Grace's side.

"No, Miss Shafton," he said, "I seldom persuade ladies to change their mind; it would be encouraging in the sex a sin which they are

too prone to commit; and, in this case, if you will only allow me the honour of being engaged to you for the first quadrille, that you *do* dance, I promise you, as long as I can maintain this enviable position by your side, to preach constancy of purpose to you; for, you are right, dancing *is* a vulgar amusement. But, remember, if you do change your mind, *I* am to have the honour of your hand."

"Then," replied Grace, amused by the quiet ease, and pleased with the agreeable countenance of her companion, "there are two excellent reasons why I should not do so."

"Two *reasons*, Miss Shafton—you shock me! ladies should never have a reason for any thing they do; but, do, pray, for the curiosity of the thing, allow me to hear them."

"Why," replied Grace, "in the first place, to retrieve the character of my sex; and in the second, to spare you from joining in a vulgar amusement. But, pardon my ignorance, I thought it was very fashionable to dance."

"Oh, no! the really distinguished never do it; they only gaze with listless indifference, yawn, criticize the manners and dress of their friends; and, when they think that they have made a sufficient sensation in one party, they withdraw—to effect a similar desideratum in another."

"It is, then, the fashion to be indifferent to all that is passing around?"

"To *be* indifferent?—oh, no! I did not say that. There is no class of creatures less indifferent than our pretenders to *ton*."

"And, perhaps, those who pretend to find most amusement in these scenes, are really most indifferent about them?"

"Ah! I see you are a bit of a philosopher!" said her companion, with a shrewd glance. "You spoke that in the true tone of a moraliser. It would be in vain to interest one, who thinks so wisely, with a scene so foolish as the present."

"No, no!" said Grace, laughing and blushing. "To convince you of the contrary, I feel

very curious to know who that lady is, that stands near the folding doors, leaning on the arm of a tall gentleman."

"That," said Mr. Falkland, following the direction of her eyes, "is the Duchess de Rinucci. She is an Englishwoman, the wife of an Italian duke of immense possessions, which, it is said, formed the principal inducement to the union, on her, and her father's, part. There could be no other reason for such a sacrifice, for I cannot conceive a more unininteresting biped than the Duke."

"Is that the Duke with her?"

"Good heavens, Miss Shafton, you shock me! Can you suppose it natural or possible for man and wife to appear, in an affectionate manner, at an assembly? Such a circumstance would be a solecism in good breeding—a tacit accusation of one's ancestors. It will be passing strange, if the Duke shows his face in this room to-night, while his wife continues to be present."

"I blush for my ignorance," said Grace, "but

when I confess to you that this is my very first season in town, and my very first appearance at my very first party, you will be lenient to me?"

Mr. Falkland was gazing so intently and admiringly upon the beautiful girl before him, that he brought a troop of burning blushes to her face. Aroused, at once, to a sense of his rudeness (if rudeness be a fit term for such admiration as his), he resumed the conversation —"The gentleman that accompanies the Duchess de Rinucci," he said, "is Lord Charles Fitzrook, the second son of the late Earl Winterville."

"She is extremely handsome," said Grace. "With what dignity she moves through the crowd. There is, however, a consciousness of beauty and pride of place in her deportment, which, I think, deteriorates her loveliness. Do you not think so?"

"I do, indeed, Miss Shafton!" was Falkland's rather laconic rejoinder. As the pair, who had undergone the above investigation, approached,

the eyes of Lord Charles became rivetted on Grace; then, with a sudden exclamation, he turned to the Duchess. She looked haughtily round, and fixing a speculating stare on Grace, answered, with apparent nonchalance. She seemed to desire to pass on, but Lord Charles, spying Mrs. Stanhope on the other side of Grace, made a dead stop, and the Duchess, who was well acquainted with her, and, from policy, on civil terms, was obliged to pause and pay her compliments. This was gone through, however, with a *certain hauteur*, that Mrs Stanhope was in the habit of returning with a *certain indifference*. It was a very dissimilar greeting on the part of Lord Charles, who really esteemed Mrs. Stanhope; and, on this occasion he was too anxious to be introduced to her friend to permit the opportunity to slip. "My dear Mrs Stanhope, is there any peculiar reason in force, that prevents my having the honour of being known to your fair friend?" Mrs. Stanhope smiled a negative, and the ceremony of introduction was performed. The Duchess was startled at hear-

ing the name of Shafton, and regarded Grace with a glance like that of a tame tigress, when the sight of a kid brings back the savage."

Does not Miss Shafton dance?" asked Lord Charles, "I was instituted master of the ceremonies, and take shame to myself for my negligence in being so late to make the enquiry. But I trust to Miss Shafton's mercy, and beg for the happiness of leading her to share the ensuing quadrille."

"Too late, my lord," exclaimed Falkland, "I have been neither so blind nor so negligent, as to allow Miss Shafton to want a partner, though, in myself, an unworthy substitute for those that should have forestalled me."

"You are a lucky fellow, Falkland; but I shall live in hope of the favour of Miss Shafton's hand for the following set. Mind, my good Falkland, there is no monopolizing in a ball-room:—there, the empire of beauty is supported by every champion that wears a glove. I wait for Miss Shafton's assent."

Grace having agreed, Lord Charles, and the

Duchess (with a bow of petrifying politesse) moved on.

"What do you think of 'her Grace,' upon a more microscopic inspection?" asked Falkland.

"I am not disappointed in the expression; it is, as I before thought, too haughty; yet I still consider her features eminently beautiful."

"Features, oh yes!" replied Falkland, "the features are well chiselled, carefully and exquisitely; but they betray the poverty that reigns within. There is nothing amiable in that lady's spirit, or, I have read my books badly."

Mrs. Stanhope, here, interrupted the conversation, by hinting that Grace ought to stand up for the next quadrille. I must not, she thought, allow her to be monopolized.

"There!" exclaimed Falkland, "I knew my happiness would be short-lived. After this stupid quadrille, I shall have to resign you, Miss Shafton. But, hang it, I will not damp my joy by apprehending its termination."

As Grace passed on towards the dancers, she

recognised her father conversing with an old friend. The sweet smile of recognition was not lost on Falkland. "You know that gentleman?" he asked

"My dear father!" answered Grace, her face beaming with affection. Again Mr. Falkland's eyes were fixed admiringly on her. He said in his heart—'Here is a treasure indeed!'

"Pray do not fatigue yourself with attending on me!" said the Duchess to her companion, her face, at the moment, a reflex of all the unamiable passions. "Lead me to a seat, and then, you will be free (with a sarcastic smile) to fulfil your duties as master of the ceremonies."

"I am sure, Augusta, you have, always, begged me *not* to be exclusive in my attentions to you; and, now, it is unjust to feel angry at my endeavour to obey you."

"A painful endeavour, my lord? I regret it should be so painful to your feelings to observe my request. But, you are quite right." She suppressed the rest of her intended obser-

vations, being too proud to *wish* to appear jealous, and too politic not to endeavour to conceal that she really felt so. "I hate that Mrs. Stanhope," she exclaimed after a moment's silence, "there is a pretension about her hugely ridiculous."

"There is penetration enough in her to teach people caution!" said Lord Charles, "and that is why I am particularly cautious before her."

"Well, now," said the Duchess, throwing herself into a seat, "pray, leave me, here comes Talbot, and I have something to say to him; so I dispense with you."

As Lord Charles moved away, Mr. Talbot took his place by the offended fair one.

"How, in the name of Heaven! comes *she* here?" asked the Duchess abruptly.

"Ay, that is just what I have asked myself," responded the amiable coadjutor. "I am, perhaps, more surprised than your Grace; the old fellow must have heard of the report, and thinks to stifle it by dragging her into society."

"But you told me it was decided, fact!" returned her Grace rather accusingly.

"Pardon me, your Grace; I told you that it had been so reported; and your Grace begged me to act as if I were certain of the fact."

The Duchess bit her lip, and answered nothing.

"But, after all," went on the serpent, "since the Earl is gone, what have you to fear?"

"I hate the girl," she said in a suppressed voice, "mortally hate her! She has thwarted my favorite scheme; deprived me of the society of a brother so inestimably dear to me; and, now—"

"And now," thought Talbot she bids fair to eclipse your Grace." But his words were at variance with his feelings. "I am equally mortified, your Grace, for, to say truth, her appearance here sadly interferes with a little plan that I had formed for myself."

"Indeed?"

"Yes, indeed! I was waiting only until the

disappointment, occasioned by the Earl's withdrawal, should have been forgotten; intending to offer myself as a substitute and consoler. You know, your Grace, she is a pretty girl and has cash."

The Duchess eyed him with a look of scorn; "could he," she inwardly ejaculated, "hope to succeed after de Courcy?—But why should the young lady's being in town interfere with your intention?" she asked aloud.

"Most materially! Here, she will be surrounded by a host of admirers, and I shall have to contend with a troop of rivals, whose pretensions will fling me into the shade 'in an instant, suddenly,' as some one says. I am an affectionate and likely fellow enough, but my green fields are gone to the hammer. Your Grace, will estimate my hopes accordingly."

"I perceive the difficulties to your success," answered the Duchess, "but cannot your fertile brain originate some plan of cooling the ardour of your contemporaries?"

"It would be very difficult!"

"Difficulties should only arouse a man of your genius to exertion."

"Will your Grace give me your powerful assistance?"

"Decidedly!"

"Well then, why not proceed upon the old idea? whisper the mother's madness, and her predisposition."

"I doubt its success! She looks anything but a person likely to fall subject to such a disease; and then, there is that Mrs. Stanhope, who, if she hear the slightest breath of such a report, will be activity itself to overturn it. Most probably, she is fully acquainted with the exact state of the case."

"We must try it! there are no other possible means to be employed."

"So be it then," and the Duchess rose to greet her dear friend Lady Georgianna Fitzrook.

"Have you seen this new beauty, this star, that the people are raving about?"

"I have not, certainly, seen anything very

extraordinary in the way of beauty!" replied the Duchess with indifference.

"Nor I, to say the truth! but, really, the fuss about this Miss Somebody, who may appear to be nobody, is excessively ridiculous. There is Mr. Falkland crying her up for an angel; and even Charles, who, you know, is fastidious, says she is the most charming creature he ever beheld."

"Indeed" replied the Duchess, "come, let us look on this peerless creature together; perhaps we shall discover that the men are not in the wrong. Your brother has taste: as for Falkland, he is not worthy of critical credit."

The friends walked towards the dancers; Grace was just finishing her quadrille with Lord Charles; the exertion, added to the evident admiration she excited, had summoned a brilliant flush into her cheek—she looked "beautiful exceedingly." As she smilingly replied to some sally of her partner, she caught the eye of the Duchess fixed upon her. What was there

in that look that so suddenly checked the smile upon her lip, and gave so quick a pang to her heart? she knew not, but its effect was truly unpleasant. "So beautiful" she thought, "and yet so painful to look upon! twice, when I have met her eyes, I have observed the same expression. Why does she gaze at me with such an unkindly eye?" As she thus mused, without answering Lord Charles' twice-repeated question, he turned to see upon whom her attention was so rivetted, and was not particularly gratified to observe the calm and cold expression of contempt and scorn, with which the Duchess encountered his eye.

"Had it been a man that had so long engaged the attention of Miss Shafton," he said, "so as to render her deaf to my request, I should have felt deeply mortified; but a lady is a very different subject of interest, and, to her, I must yield with the best grace I can command."

Grace blushed. "I do not know how it

happens," she replied, "but there is something in the countenance of that lady (alluding to the Duchess) which reminds me of some one I have seen; and yet, certainly, I have never seen any one so handsome."

"She is considered very like her brother, the Earl de Courcy; but I cannot say that—you are quite fatigued with the heat, Miss Shafton, let me take you to a place, where breathing is possible, and an ice procurable."

"Thank you, I will go; the heat is certainly intolerable!" returned Grace, with her first attempt at 'Talleyrandism.'

"Why Grace, you look shockingly pale and fatigued!" cried Mrs. Stanhope on her return, "I fear you will make but a poor rake."

"I fear so, too, dear Madam, and do, indeed, feel so worn with the gaiety, novelty, and heat of this scene, that, if you will allow papa to take me away, I shall be very glad."

"I will take you myself, my dear child; I never stay late at these parties, when alone.

Beckoning to the Doctor to join them, she informed him of their determination, and despite the accusations, sighs and entreaties of the despairing beaux, Grace persisted in departing. Lord Charles handed her to the carriage, and expressed his determination to call early to enquire after her health.

"Well," asked Lady Georgiana, "what do you think of her?"

"Oh, *passablement jolie!* who is she pray?" returned the innocent Duchess.

"A Miss Shafton—I think that is her name."

"Shafton! Shafton!" repeated the Duchess, "oh, but it can't be! her father would never be such an idiot as to bring her in to society."

"What is it, love, do you know anything about her?"

"It cannot be the person I have heard about, whose mother died raving mad."

"Who was she?"

"The daughter of a physician."

"A London physician?"

"Yes."

"Who retired from business, after his wife's death, and settled at ——— in Gloucestershire?"

"Exactly! how singular that you bring th whole story to my recollection. But, this i not that Doctor Shafton, dear Georgy, is it?"

"The very same, my dear. How horrid only think, to bring a girl, disposed to such a frightful malady, among us! I do not know, how to account for it, but I did really feel an odd sort of feeling when looking at her, just now. I'm sure she is about to be a maniac, and a very violent one, very suddenly; that is, if she has not commenced already!"

"Nay, I dare say she is not exactly mad at present; only likely, in all probability, to become so; and it appears to me, that bringing her into the dissipation of London will be the very course to bring it on."

"Oh, my dear creature, it is beyond common

decency and delicacy—it is barbarous! I shall, certainly, warn Charles, for he seems rather struck with her. A set of insane nephews and nieces shrieking "aunt" in my ears, think, dearest Augusta, think what it would be! I shall tell him the first thing in the morning, that's decided."

"Pray, be careful how you spread the report, my dear Georgiana; because, you know, dearest, one would not willingly, or wilfully, do the poor thing an injury." The Duchess knew that she could not have adopted a more effectual plan of setting her friend's tongue in motion, than by requesting her to be careful. If she greatly desired an affair to be known everywhere, and that quickly, she, immediately, disclosed it to Lady Georgiana, under a strong seal of secrecy. The effect was sure to answer her expectations.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Did anything particular happen to annoy you, at the party last evening, my dear Grace?" asked Dr. Shafton, on his daughter entering the breakfast room. "I observed you change colour so suddenly that I feared something must have affected you; and, this morning, you look languid, and as if you had not slept."

"You are too anxious about me, my dearest father; I do not feel quite so well to-day. But I am a poor weak creature, unworthy so much care and affection!" and she took her father's hand affectionately in hers.

The Doctor looked anxiously and enquiringly in her face.

"It was," said Grace, "a mere nothing; I am ashamed it should have had such an effect on me: it was the unexpected knowledge that it was *his* sister who looked so unkindly upon me."

"Looked so unkindly on you my child," repeated the Doctor amazed.

"Perhaps, it was my foolish fancy; but, as I was dancing with Lord Charles Fitzrook, I observed the eyes of a lady fixed earnestly upon me, the expression of whose countenance, though extremely beautiful, was so full of—I must say it—*hate*, and malice, that I was startled. I was told, immediately afterwards, that she was the sister of de Courcy."

"And you were agitated; I am not surprised, Grace: time only can heal our wounded feelings. I, myself, observed that lady, the Duchess de Rinucci, and, I must say, was not at all pleased with the expression of her countenance: had

her brother resembled her, I should not have been deceived."

"There is a resemblance in feature."

"The difference in expression so entirely destroys it, that I should never have perceived it: you will, in time, my dear Grace, arm yourself, I hope, to meet these occasions. But what say you to a ride?"

"A quiet ride, with you, papa, O delightful; it will revive me more than anything."

"I am going to run away with Grace for a few hours," said the Doctor to Mrs. Stanhope, who now entered the room, "she is looking pale, and I prescribe a ride for her."

"The best thing in the world!" replied Mrs. Stanhope, "to bring back the roses; but, during your absence, I expect that I shall be terribly besieged; she made such havoc last night, that, I wager, I shall have a score of wounded knights. Well, I must do the best I can with them."

"If it should be as you anticipate, my dear Madam," said Grace, as she left the room to prepare for her ride, "I shall not regret my absence, except," she added archly, "for the task imposed upon you."

"Oh, never mind me; I shall derive amusement from the hopes, hints, and enquiries by which I shall be beset. So, get you gone, and return with a fresh supply of 'artillery'."

Mrs. Stanhope was right; many were the visitors, and many the enquiries, and many the hints thrown out for an invitation to dinner; but to Mr. Falkland, alone, was that favour extended. Mrs. Stanhope, it is true, did inform Lord Charles that they should be at the opera that evening; which, in some measure, consoled him for the disappointment of not seeing Grace, during his visit of the morning.

The little party, at the dinner table of Mrs. Stanhope, that day, might, for its really domestic cheerfulness, have well been envied.

Mr. Falkland could never have been mistaken

for a *mere* man of fashion; though, if the distinction be a desirable one, so far as person and manners went, he had every pretension to it. No one could look upon his manly and handsome countenance, without being convinced that he had an honest heart; and no one could converse with him, without perceiving that, to a superior education, he united a keen wit and great knowledge of the world. He was looked upon in very different lights, by very different people; for instance, whilst one party accused him of being a philanthropist, another thought him cynical and sarcastic: perhaps, neither were very wrong, for he did, indeed, love to laugh at the follies of the fashionable world in which he moved, and, it was observable, that his presence checked the babble of the scandal monger. Malice dared not openly show itself, and even the Miss Fibspredders were on their guard before him, having, several times found, from experience, that their illnature recoiled upon their own heads. With Mrs. Stanhope

he was an especial favorite, for she knew and appreciated his good qualities, those which, not without some truth, entitled him to the epithet of a philanthropist. She had asked him a thousand times why he did not marry; and he had as often, replied. "When you can find me a wife, that will marry me for myself—whose time is not entirely occupied with acquiring accomplishments that neither improve her head nor heart—whose heart is not fixed upon dress or flirtation, and whose mind is above envy and malice: in short, when you can find me a *wife*, I am ready to become a Benedict." Mrs. Stanhope laughed and told him to resign himself to an old bachelor's destiny.

Many had been the attempts to catch this formidable person, for his family and fortune were unexceptionable. Lady Georgiana had played off all her various moods upon him to no purpose; and he had only been relieved from the siege she laid to him, by her more

important attack upon de Courcy. Season after season found Mr. Falkland still a bachelor; and it, at last, became the general belief that he was not a marrying man.

"I am anticipating an immense gratification to-night, Miss Shafton," said he, as he helped Grace on with her shawl.

"You are fond of the opera?"

"Yes, very; but it is not from the opera that I anticipate my principal gratification."

"No."

"No, it is from my expectation of your surprise and enjoyment. You are fond of music, and it is your first appearance there. I shall, indeed, be disappointed if you do not experience as much pleasure as I anticipate."

"Oh, you intend to amuse yourself with my rustic astonishment! but, beware that you raise not my expectations too high: you know not the power of imagination."

"We shall see! I remember the effect it had upon myself, and I do not imagine Miss

Shafton wanting in taste or feeling; neither do I expect she has so soon learnt the art of appearing indifferent to every thing, however worthy of attention."

Mr. Falkland was not disappointed. Grisi, that princess of song, played the part of Norma. Her exquisite singing, joined to her powerful personification of the character, so enthralled Grace, that, during the second act, she was perfectly insensible to any thing, except the scenic delusion. At its conclusion, when the exquisite pézzo, 'Quel cor tradisti,' was sung, she was pale with emotion; and, when the curtain dropped, felt a choking sensation, that seemed hardly possible to have been created by a mere delusion.

Lord Charles, who had entered the box, for some time, waited impatiently an opportunity to address her, but, even after the conclusion of the piece, it was long before she had sufficiently recovered herself, to listen to, and reply to his compliments and enquiries.

She soon turned to Falkland, and with an arch smile, said, "well, you have had your triumph! I think I was sufficiently entranced?"

"So you appeared indeed Miss Shafton," said Lord Charles, "for I have been trying, in vain, to get a look or a word from you, the last hour."

"How could you be so unreasonable as to expect that I should have had eyes or ears for any thing, whilst the opera was going forward," answered Grace.

"Fye, Miss Shafton," said Falkland, laughing, "you must never confess to this; no one, I assure you, thinks of attending to the music: people do not come to listen, but to have an opportunity of talking, quizzing, and being quizzed."

"Then, I fear, I shall never become fashionable in that respect; for I really must listen, be it ever so absurd."

"Do you think it absurb?" asked Falkland.

"I! no in truth! but, if I may be allowed

to speak my own opinion, I think the absurdity lies with those who come to hear what they do not think worth listening to."

"And believe me, I quite agree with you," replied Falkland. "But," he continued, in a lighter tone, "before you become fashionable, you must dispose of heart, ears, and understanding."

"Then, I hope I never shall become fashionable!"

"Amen," responded Falkland.

"For shame, Falkland!" exclaimed Lord Charles. "My dear Miss Shafton, I must put you on your guard against my friend Falkland, who, I must tell you, is a cynic; no one escapes his censure, and—"

"Hold!" cried Falkland, "I must keep you within the bounds of the preamble. If you please, instead of *no one*, substitute no *custom* that serves to deprave the heart, and ruin the understanding."

"Hush, my good fellow! The truth is,

Miss Shafton, he wishes to disgust you with a London life; and yet, I assure you, he cannot, himself, live in any other atmosphere, notwithstanding its dangerous qualities."

"I am proof against its noxious vapours," cried Falkland, "I wish a fair lady would try me, I should soon convince her that London is not my favourite element."

"Good again," replied Lord Charles, with an ironical laugh, "a confirmed bachelor, Miss Shafton, a forswearer of the joys of matrimony."

"A forswearer of the joys of matrimony, if they are to be tested by a fashionable standard, decidedly!" remarked Falkland significantly.

"A miracle! a miracle!" cried Lord Charles, "Falkland turned moraliser upon matrimony, you are becoming a perfect reformer! I shall expect soon to hear of Falkland's lectures on the state of immorality in the metropolis—or of his coming out with a book on the subject."

"No," replied Falkland coldly, "those, more

powerful than I can pretend to be, have, already, attempted it, and have thrown away much time and trouble in the task. Believe me, however, I shall never be laughed out of my reason; and shall always raise my voice, though it be uselessly, against either folly or vice. But, you have not told me, Miss Shafton, what you think of the house, and of the fair faces that surround it."

"Brilliant and beautiful," returned Grace, as she turned to look on the gay scene. In the opposite box she descried the Duchess de Rinucci, accompanied by Lady Georgiana. But, having no wish again to encounter the haughty looks of that proud beauty, and, as the ballet had commenced, she turned her attention to the stage; but now, it certainly could not be said that her attention was absorbed. Her unsophisticated notions were at variance both with the dress of the dancers and their style of performance: it seemed to her that it was rather an exhibition of strength and agility than of

grace, and Mrs. Stanhope, seeing that she was not amused, rose to depart.

Lord Charles, probably, being unwilling to encounter the angry glances of his mistress, who could not have failed to observe his devotion, accepted Mrs. Stanhope's invitation, and returned with them to supper.

The following evening was that of Mrs. Melody's *réunion;* and Grace, Mrs. Stanhope, and the Doctor, were early in attendance. They were ushered into one of a suite of rooms, which was furnished in the most superb, but rather Harem-like fashion; presenting what Byron calls,

> "A dazzling mass of gems, and gold, and glitter,
> Magnificently mingled in a litter;"

and containing a very strange assortment of animated animals. Young men, with no greater distinctive properties than long hair and patent boots, were lolling in various corners, seemingly buried in profound admiration of the subtilty

of some intricate, and, consequently, beautiful progression in harmony of a recent German composer.

One of these, an obliging fellow enough, but a profound fool, requires a more detailed delineation. His figure was undergoing the last phase between a barely actual state of blood bone and muscle, and immaterialism. At the period to which we allude, he was acknowledged, publickly, as a quick skeleton, and a very forbidding one into the bargain. Since then, he has thinned perceptibly, and by the time our second edition goes to press, will probably have become an invisible genius. His hair, like a load of straw on a starved jackass, lay all about his face, neck and shoulders, and being of a lanky and thin nature, it suggested very uncomfortable apprehensions and speculations in the minds of the beholders; as if they saw before them, one just rescued from the jaws of a liquid death; or a tenant of the sepulchre with a head-dress of worms. His upper lip was embellished with a moustache,

thin, sleek, and mildly apparent; and his nether lip was furnished *a la martyr*, with the Charles Stuart augular beard. He had long taper legs terminating in long slender feet; and long lanky arms, terminating in long Paganini hands; which latter, were, ever and anon, pressed emphatically to his sides, as if to keep him from falling to pieces; or, to judge by his looks, indicating a confirmed and hopeless affection of the heart; for, whenever he indulged in the movement, he cast his eyes—which were large, and of an ashy-grey hue, and always stretched to their utmost limits, (denoting the possession of genius,) towards the ceiling, then, hurried them impetuously to the floor; thus painfully exhibiting the rapidity of his inconscious and conscious sensations, and quite as forcibly as a frog under the operating hand of *Marshall Hall*, or *M. F. Magendie.*

This was Mrs. Melody's great 'Pianofortoist,' as she loved to call him*, and the grand instru-

* Fact.

[illegible] of her sisters. Talking to him, and making futile endeavours to be attended to, appeared a gray-headed person, who, from the very peculiar gathers at the corners of his eyes, seemed a dangerous chap to trust in one's family. This individual, we discovered, had scraped some money together in ways unknown to man, and, consequently, was privileged in many houses, as much on that account as on his capability of adding to the amusement by singing and scandalising. Mrs. Melody was attached to him by these, and by another quality; which was, that, when teaching her, (for he did teach) he did not forget that she was of the softer sex, and that she required to be, as he poetically rendered it, "endeared into being diligent."

Mrs. Melody has been described. She was attired *a la Regina*, in order to do scenic, as well as vocal justice to Donizetti's '*Ah! segnata è la mia sorte*,' the finale of the first act of *Anna Bolena*. She shrieked through it with exemplary perseverance. Her face was like a

kaelidiscope under the havoc of her performance: it changed colour and expression, at every note that went down, and every note that came up. Now, it was hideous in the *enragè*, now miserable in the *dolore*. She would have won any wager at any fair, and wanted nothing but a horse collar to give intelligence to her proceedings.

The scena over, the great 'Pianofortoist' was led to the instrument. He sank on the music-stool, as if perfectly unconscious of what was required of him; but, seeing the keys before him, he, suddenly, made one electric dash at them, as if he considered he was paying an unrequited score for the first time. He slid his long slimy fingers, now over, now under; now stretched them an awful stretch, for some peculiar and personal whim; now made a transit from double F, to the highest existing note, and looked desperately disappointed at being unable to ascend any higher. He then began *trilling* a tremolo movement, conjuring up

a thousand charnel house ideas, and embodying them in his own (we were going to say) person: and now, when the sound seemed dying away, and silence was broken only by that breath-like buzz, which the holding down of the soft pedal produces, he made a convulsive and ferocious crash, with *all* his hands and fingers, which acted like a double-actioned cataplasm, calling the instrument to life in a minute, and frightening half a dozen wires off the hooks into the air, where they writhed and capered like so many released devils. The trisyllable "wonderful!" resounded through the room; and the "magician," determined on securing his popularity, and unstringing the instrument, commenced pommelling the keys in a *fieramente* passage, crushing them with malicious fury, and looking, all the while, like one taking a last earthly vengeance on the objects of his long-treasured indignation. His eyes—his genius-betraying eyes—had called forcibly on the *levatores palpebrarium*, and, dispensing with the *notores*

occulorum, had fixed themselves fairly on the cheek bones, like a pair of Roman lights. His mouth was half open, and his moustache and Stuart were covered with foam. Visible perspiration burst from his pores! His hair, enlarging itself from the combining effect of recent pomatum, wandered like streams of Acheron, over his frenzied face. Slowly and surely it began to absorb that tablet; until, at length, during the thunder of the concluding chords, he was completely veiled from the observers. It seemed as if he had been removed from this material world, leaving only a wig and a suit of clothes for his friends to weep over.

On the removal of these items, a tender, trembling and terribly timid young lady was handed to the vacant pedestal. After a tiny cough or two, and a little confusion on the keys in the way of symphony, she began to surprise silence with a very singular kind of sound—just such a one as would make a cat cautious and observing. The company darted an in-

quisitive glance at her, pausing a moment or two, as if in doubt whether to listen or to laugh, and then, in sheer compassion, began talking audibly.

"Hush!" cried the host in a subterraneous whisper.

"Pia-piano, silenzio!" lisped his affected rib, in a voice which she took care to be generally unheard; for she desired deeply to *cut* the young aspirant at the piano. The crowd gratified her; they did not bate a degree of their uproar. The warbler appeared to gather strength from their neglect; she was growing absolutely audible.

"Shame!" roared the host, imitating a distant roar of artillery.

Silence again predominated, for the crowd ceased, but the voice of the minstrel waxed faint in the hush:—when the moment, in which an impression might have been made, was gained for her, the trembling young lady could not take advantage of it.

"She's done!" cried a fat, forty-four-year-

old Colonel, "she's done! my dear fellow, go on. And so, the sappers and miners—?" This cue was enough, away went the multitude at desperate odds, and the happy moment was irrecoverable. The young lady finished, resumed her gloves and handkerchief, and was conveyed from the tribune, during a small pause of politeness. Mrs. Melody complimented her on her flattering reception, telling innumerable antitruisms about her 'surprising voice, and perfect *portamento*.'

"And now," she began, addressing herself to a young amateur fiddleist, "now—" and she intended that "now," to announce wonders—"may I entreat the pleasure of your delightful talent on this occasion, to add a lustre to our—"

"Melodious proceedings," chimed in the self-confident rosiner. With very great pleasure, my dear Madam; I am extremely happy to be enabled to add to the interest of the evening." The speaker was a tall buckish looking fellow, in a Newmarket green coat, brass initial buttons to match, a white satin waistcoat, and "other

particulars" of white cassimere. Looking perfectly competent to astonish, he advanced to that division of the apartment which Mrs. Melody called her "Scala." There, amusing himself with his violin, he seemed fearless of all odds; and, as if he had formed the determination of revenging his predecessor, he with a remarkable velocity and vigour of hand, saluted the strings of the instrument. The effect was electric: every eye was bent upon him, and the consciousness gratified him. Another burst of sound was wrenched out of the affrighted instrument, which answered the application of the bow, like the wretched criminal when, bound to the wheel, the executioner strikes the mace at his naked limbs. At the noise of the last note, the fat Colonel was aroused—"ah," cried he, this "fellow promises to do something."

"Hush, hush," cried the performer, reddening at what he conceived an insult. Yet the Colonel's words were not lost upon him. "Something?" he muttered to himself. "Verily

you're right, my old cock—I *am* going to do something!" And something he did do with a vengeance. He laboured at the violin like a Cyclops, until he had cut his way through three of the strings; and then, like Paganini, made the remaining one answer the noise of four.

"Bravo, bravo!" cried the Colonel, "lay it on! lay it on! This *is* music!"

The performer, having satisfied himself and the public that no other man *would*, under similar circumstances, have done what he did; and having effected the stoppage of his elbow, and the thinning of the room, laid down his violin on the piano, and strutted back to his seat, with a consequence in strict keeping with his position.

"Was that a piece of your own composition, Mr. Rasper?" enquired Mrs. Melody.

"Oh, yes! it was an extemporaneous trifle," he answered, "though the idea of playing away the three strings is, certainly, due to

Paganini—and to him," he added with mock pomp, " I make *that* acknowledgment."

" It was perfectly beautiful, wonderful, and profound!" sighed Mrs. Melody.

" I thank you," he answered drily, at what he considered faint praise.

" I could scarcely keep my seat, when you came to the passage on one string," returned Mrs. Melody.

" My dear madam, you will favour us with another of your charming songs?" requested Mr. Rasper, touched by the earnest commendation implied in her last expression. This was what Mrs. Melody wanted—she blushed, paused, and then—

" Since you particularly request it, I suppose I must oblige you?" and she took the possession of the music stool.

There we leave her; and there the company left her; and there she would have remained for ever, had not her husband made his appearance, when all were gone, in his dressing-gown, and invoked her to her chamber.

CHAPTER XIV.

"I do not believe one word of it, Georgy." said Lord Charles Fitzrook to his sister, as they sat the next morning in her ladyship's little sanctum. "Some idle tale, got up, in mere petticoat malice, to repress the admiration her beauty is exciting. I wish every pretty girl of my acquaintance were half so free from insanity as Miss Shafton is! I will as soon believe that you could enter into a scheme to do the young lady an injury, my own dear Georgy, as that there is an iota of truth in what has been mentioned to you."

"Oh, just as you think proper! only let me advise you, before you lay your hand and fortune at her feet, to have some little caution; remember, it is well known that her mother died raving mad!"

"And if she *lived* raving mad I should care just as much. Miss Shafton, I tell you, is quite sane enough for me. What is there in the nervous organization of the Fitzrooks, that they should be so particular about perfectly developed brains in their wives? I'm sure, if my father had been so particular, we should not sit where we do sit, my dear Georgy. But all that foolery about old bedlam nurses' tales, and hereditary humbug, is lost upon me."

"Really, Charles, you surprise me; you speak new and strangely."

"It's a symptom, perhaps, of the lineal and careful transmission of the peculiarity of my breed. I wish to heavens, property would descend as certainly and dividually as do the thoughts, desires, and fooleries of our ancestors!

"You are not serious?"

"I never was more like being so, then, I protest to you! But come, let us have the author of this pretty palpable fib; and by jove, a third of the name is said already. The Fib-spredders I'll venture my life!"

"You would lose your life then, for it was the Duchess that told me; and I hope you will allow that she is not a person inclined to fabricate such a report?"

"Oh, ho!" thought Lord Charles, "my inamorata is jealous, is she?" but he concealed his sentiments, and replied, "certainly, if it came from her, it requires investigation."

"Well, I am glad you are more reasonable. I cannot, for my part, think what you can possibly see in the girl to admire so much."

"Women seldom judge well or fairly of another's beauty."

"I am not aware that I ought to fear to praise any one's beauty."

"You, certainly, need not—I am only sur-

prised that so pretty a girl should think it necessary to disparage the attractions she must see in another."

"You are very obliging!" answered the lady, with an imperceptible sneer. "But, pray, what do you think of Mr. Falkland's politeness, —never once taking the trouble to enter our box last night; he is becoming absolutely disagreeable?"

"Miss Shafton's attractions acted in the opposition, I expect."

"I believe it is only necessary for a face to be *new*," returned his sister, "with you men, and you swear by it as by a new religion. Are you going with me to the Duchess?"

"I am particularly engaged for this morning, but shall call in the course of the afternoon," answered her brother. "I *will* know the truth of this matter!" he exclaimed, stepping into his cab, "and to know the truth, I must go, at once, to the fountain head. Mrs. Stanhope will not tell a falsehood, and she must know

something about it. Augusta is jealous: alas, how can I be surprised? I can no longer conceal my feelings—I have ceased to love! Did I ever love?" Lord Charles was obliged to answer that query in the affirmative. Once he had loved her—passionately loved her—and, had she not sacrificed herself to wealth, might have made her a constant and affectionate husband. But, when he found that she, who had thrown him off as a husband, could still encourage his attentions as a lover—esteem, the only true foundation of affection, began to decline:—when she forgot her duties as a wife, it was lost altogether. He was not so much a man of the world as to prefer a woman for her faults—no, there was much in his character noble and manly, but there was a weakness that combatted his good intentions, and, unfortunately, had ruled him hitherto. But it was evident to himself, and suspected by another, that he was becoming an altered man.

The Duchess was that other. She felt keenly

that her hold upon his heart was gradually losing its influence. Though silent, even to herself, upon this fact, she had endeavoured to draw him closer, by a union between his sister and Lord de Courcy; and Lord Charles, who highly esteemed (perhaps because he felt he had wronged) her brother, had lent a ready ear to the proposal. This design, however, as has been related, had entirely failed; and the Duchess was more than ever removed from the hope she had nourished. What was her rage, then, when the cause of that failure, as she imagined, now came to rob her of the heart for which she had played so deeply? Her hatred and desire for revenge were of the most perfect kind. Lord Charles, though he did not imagine the height to which the Duchess would carry her jealous rage, yet knew enough of her to feel convinced that she would not be scrupulous. Still the present report was such a strange one, that she could not have wholly invented it: there was great danger in originating it, and

there must be some sort of foundation for it. Thus, scanning the question in his mind, he arrived at Hertford Street.

He found Grace and her father just mounted for a ride, the former, to his mind, looking more beautiful than ever. After paying his salutations, he flew up stairs in search of Mrs. Stanhope.

"Ah, you are too late!" cried the lady, "the bird is flown."

"I saw Miss Shafton and her father at the door," replied Lord Charles.

"Indeed! then I am to consider this honour as especially and clearly intended to me?"

"Now, that is a reproach I do not deserve; for, you know, I am always anxious to devote an hour to you. I was, of old, and am, at present, extremely fond of your society."

"Which fondness has increased amazingly within the last few days."

"Well, I can positively assert, without fear of any contradiction, that my present visit is

to you, and you alone; and, moreover, that I should have been disappointed had I found you otherwise than alone."

"Then, you must have some important communication to make, or some secret to deliver."

"Neither one nor the other! yet, I must confess that I have a strong motive for desiring this interview."

"Ah, I thought it would out! Come, let me hear it! You want to know the amount of Doctor Shafton's rent-roll, and the number of thousands his heiress may expect."

"Indeed, you are quite wrong; you do me foul injustice; for, from the little I have seen of Miss Shafton, that man would be unworthy of her, who could make fortune a consideration. No, though I confess myself deeply interested in the young lady, yet, from a report I heard this morning, had she millions added to her really great attractions, no man would feel happy in making her a wife."

"Indeed!" said Mrs. Stanhope, drawing

herself up proudly, "may I ask the nature of this alarming report?"

"I came on purpose to tell it to you, knowing that you would act with perfect sincerity. You knew the late Mrs. Shafton?" he asked, after a pause.

"Perfectly! she was almost as lovely, and quite as amiable as her daughter."

"And—and—did you know her of late years, —I mean the concluding years of her life?"

"Our intimacy was unbroken; I was present at the birth of the dear girl, whom I begin to love as my own daughter; and closed the eyes of her mother before three years were quite fulfilled. She took cold in going out too soon after her accouchement—it brought on consumption, and she perished." Mrs. Stanhope was much affected while mentioning the circumstances, and the tear of real regret stole over her unrouged cheek.

"I thought it was false, by Heaven!" exclaimed her companion vehemently.

"What did you think was false? What does all this mean?" enquired Mrs. Stanhope, in real alarm.

"Why the tale that some industrious liar, (excuse me the expression) is circulating, about her predisposition to insanity—"

"Good God!"

"Nay, hear it all—her mother's being a maniac, and having died raving, and her father, well knowing the fact of his daughter's liability to the disease, dragging her into society that she may snatch a title before the period of its appearance. There, you have the exact story, word for word, as it was poured into my ears."

"False and contemptible in the extreme!" exclaimed Mrs. Stanhope, with a glowing face. "Who dared to spread such a slander, my lord?"

Lord Charles was embarrassed. He had not prepared himself for this question; or, rather he had not considered the consequences of giving up the name of his informer; but the instant they flashed upon his mind, he felt all

the indelicacy of compromising the Duchess. *He*, at all events, could not, would not do so. After a moment's hesitation, he replied, "pardon me, it was told me in confidence, and I have no right—"

"Lord Charles, you have acted the part of a friend, in instantly informing me of this base calumny; but, you must allow me to say, that, in concealing the name of its propagator, you depart from the character. If you conceal the slanderer, you prevent my loading him or her with the infamy deserved."

"My dear Madam, the person I had it from did not know the immediate author; but leave it to me, and I will not rest until I have sifted the matter to the bottom. If possible, I will trace the fabrication to its first web: then will be the season for revenge."

"Well, I will depend on you, and I sincerely thank you for the kind interest you have displayed; let me entreat you, however, to lose no time."

"No more than is absolutely necessary; but it will require a little *finesse*."

Day after day passed, and Grace continued to mix in all the gaieties of the season. Lord Charles, and Mr. Falkland, were daily visitors; and many were the adorers who plied the knocker more frequently than they gained admission: for Mrs. Stanhope would not be beset by those she did not like. Day after day did Mrs. Stanhope ask Lord Charles for the promised information; he told her that he had prepared the train, but that the moment for putting the match, had not yet arrived.

Lord Charles had, in fact, with some art, set to work, to get to the bottom of this mystery; he took the first opportunity of finding his sister alone, to commence operations; and the following conversation ensued between them.

"I should like, very much, to know where the Duchess got her information about Miss Shafton, dear Georgy."

"Why do you not ask her, you see more of her than I do?"

"No, I see very little of her, for, to say the truth, I am not pleased with her conduct to you."

Lady Georgiana made great eyes.

"It is true, I don't think she treated you well; she made a great fuss and pretension about your marrying de Courcy: made you believe that he was desperately in love with you, when, either there was no reason for the supposition, or she thought better of it; and so, my lord went on the Continent."

This was a sore subject, and Lord Charles knew it.

"Indeed, Charles, I have had my feelings upon that point; but the Duchess still declares it was all my fault, and that he went off in a fit of jealousy."

"Fit of jealousy!—ask your own good sense, Georgy, and it will convince you that she has been making a fool of you all this time. Did de Courcy ever pay you any pointed attention? For my part, I should say not."

"So I told her, over and over again," and Lady Georgiana pouted, "but she would have it otherwise."

"Yes, she has gulled us both, finely."

"And wherefore?"

"That's more than I can tell you, Georgy."

"And," cried Lady Georgiana, her passion beginning to rise, "did I, for this, give up D'Arcy, and Sir James Lovell; and Falkland was appearing to grow very, yes, very attentive; and both he and Sir James would have been excellent matches."

"Well, I would advise you to be more prudent, for the future, and give up no one with the idea of being the Countess de Courcy; for, trust me, she has made a fool of you."

"And I will be revenged too, that I will!" and Lady Georgiana rose, and stamped her tiny foot with rage, "why did you not tell me your sentiments before?"

"For the very reason that I ought not to have told you now; the fear that you would break altogether with the Duchess, and thereby

confirm the report already circulated, that you were playing pretty to the Earl and had been disappointed."

Lady Georgiana bit her lips in rage, "what would you have me do, then?"

"Be politic; whatever your sentiments may be, keep up the same degree of intimacy; by so doing, you will stop people's tongues; for they cannot say you were more there during the Earl's visit, than you are now."

"Provoking! but I detest her; and, indeed, for that matter I always did—with her airs of superiority. But, I confess I liked de Courcy; then his rank and wealth, everything that possibly could be desired—and you, really, think he did not care for me?"

"I should say, decidedly, that he never did; I watched him closely, and am convinced he never gave you a thought, except as the friend of his sister."

"Perhaps he is in love with some foreign lady."

"He seemed to me like a man whose affec-

tions were already pre-engaged, but, whether it be so or not, 'tis impossible to say."

"Well, Charles, you are a provoking creature not to tell me all this before; here is the season half gone, and I have positively wasted it; for the Duchess would not hear of my having any one else: D'Arcy and Sir James are completely off; they say, the latter is about to be married to Miss Howard; and Falkland is entirely taken up with this Miss Shafton."

"Never mind, Georgy, never mind Falkland; I have some one better for you in my eye."

"Have you really, dear Charles?"

"Yes, really: I expect my old friend Lord Edward Stuart, in town in a week or so, and, since you are so determined on matrimony, I will take care you shall have a good chance."

"Determined on matrimony! what, do you think I wish to grow antiquated as Lady Georgiana Fitzrook?"

"No fear of that; but I can tell you Lord Edward is a devilish nice fellow, and well worth setting your cap at."

"Is he? well then, you are a dear good creature, and I will do anything to oblige you —by the bye, you wanted me to do something for you, what was it?"

"Only to find out the author of that report about Miss Shafton; do not ask it directly, and, above all, take care she does not suspect that I am interested in the matter. But you will know how to manage all that; only find it out, there's a good creature; and, dear Georgy, do not mention it to any one, until we know the real truth. I have my reasons."

"Oh, anything in the world to oblige you, Charles; I am sure, since it comes from her, I do not believe a word of it; and I shall make a point of calling on Miss Shafton to-morrow."

"That's a good girl: Miss Shafton is a very amiable person, and a large fortune."

"Yes, I understand," replied Lady Georgiana, shaking her head significantly. "Well, I sha'n't forget my promise."

"What a lamentable thing it is," thought Lord

Charles, as his sister tripped lightly away, "that women are brought up to look upon matrimony as a traffic. The man who has sisters, must distrust all woman kind—except—yes, except Grace Shafton; she is of different material."

CHAPTER XV.

"Come, dear Grace, you must positively decide on your character for the approaching masquerade; we have only a week to prepare, so lose no more time."

"Why may I not go in a domino? I shall never be able to support a character."

"A domino! no, I could not think of it; let me see, what shall we make of you? Miranda?"

"Rather say Ophelia, if we are to choose from Shakespeare. I should, I think, make an excellent representation of the love lorn maiden."

"Ophelia!" repeated Mrs. Stanhope.

"Ophelia!" echoed the Doctor, looking on

his daughter with an expression of counten
that showed he did not approve her choice.

"Strange," thought Mrs. Stanhope, "
she should pitch upon that character; well,
her take it, it will show our contempt for
slander." Then, aloud, "I think Grace, i
an excellent choice; you will look extren
pretty as Ophelia."

"But I think papa does not like the c
racter."

"I, my dear child, of what consequence is

The Doctor, in fact, was vexed that
choice had fallen upon the character, only
cause he thought that it showed a despai
spirit of mind.

"Now," said Mrs. Stanhope, "the r
thing will be to get your dress made with p
fect secrecy; that must be my care, for, I
determined no one shall know our party: a
I am sure, no one will suspect Miss Shafto
having chosen Ophelia."

"And what will you appear as, my d
Madam?" asked Grace.

"What shall it be? what say you to Queen Elizabeth?"

"Only that you have chosen a most unamiable person to represent."

"And you, Doctor?" asked Mrs. Stanhope.

"Why, I will patronise Shakespeare, and, wand in hand, figure as Prospero."

"Excellent!" and, just as this important business was settled, Lord Charles was announced.

"We must dismiss you," cried Mrs. Stanhope, "for Miss Shafton and myself are just going shopping."

"That is very cruel in you; however, let me just pay my compliments to Miss Shafton, and then, if *you* can spare me a few minutes—I have only a word or two to say, and will be off."

Mrs. Stanhope, notwithstanding her hurry, could not suppress her curiosity to hear what information Lord Charles had brought her, and whilst Grace retired to dress, eagerly asked if he had, at last, fathomed the mystery.

"I think I have discovered the fabricator; but what his motive can be I am quite at a loss to imagine."

"*His!* what, a man? I should have guessed a woman."

"You do our sex injustice; it can be as malicious as your own."

"But who is it?"

"Do you know, Talbot?"

"Talbot! I do not acknowledge an acquaintance with him; for I never could endure him, and, though he has made many efforts to be admitted into my circle, I persisted in excluding him."

"Well, he is the man!"

"Is it possible?—malice to me could not be his motive?"

"No, we must look deeper for it. Does Miss Shafton or the Doctor know him?"

"I think not; I never heard them mention his name—no, certainly not, for now I remember, he has several times been in the same

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bribe one of your household; this cannot be without motive."

"Decidedly not, I am very glad you have told me; I will take care that not a creature knows her *real* dress; all that is easily managed. And now, for your kindness, you really deserve to be taken into our party."

"That pleasure I must deny myself. I mean to keep close watch over Mr. Talbot, which I could not do were I in attendance; but I must know your dresses."

"That you shall do, and I thank you for your zeal; it deserves to be rewarded."

"But will it, my dear Madam?"

"Ah, that is a question I cannot answer."

"Well, say at least, that I have your good wishes."

Mrs. Stanhope was prevented from replying by the entrance of Dr. Shafton; and, shortly after, Grace appeared ready for the drive. Lord Charles handed her to the carriage, and, with a gentle pressure of the hand, bade her

adieu till the evening, which Mrs. Stanhope had allowed him the privilege of spending quietly with them.

At length, the important evening of the masquerade arrived. To Grace it was any thing but a source of pleasure; the trouble of supporting a character, or rather of appearing in one, was peculiarly irksome to her. Could she have witnessed the scene unobserved, she might, for a short time, have been amused with its motley and noisy groups; but to have to appear as an actor in it, was most uncongenial to her quiet tastes and habits.

Mr. Falkland was the only addition to their party; he had chosen to appear as a monk; for, he said, the fair Ophelia would look well so protected, though he would take care to keep her from a nunnery.

Mrs. Stanhope, whose figure had suffered little from time, looked extremely well in the rich, though antiquated, costume of Queen Elizabeth. And the Doctor figured to great advantage as Prospero.

The rooms were spacious, splendidly furnished, and brilliantly illuminated, the company numerous; but all, who have attended these amusements in London, must allow that they fall very short of the idea of a masquerade. It is a species of entertainment that the English are not suited for; it requires all the gaiety of heart and fondness for fun, which is to be found in the Italians, especially the Venetians, who excel in this kind of amusement. The English are too solid for it; they cannot take the trouble necessary to personate a character, even if they possessed the genius and wit requisite for its support. The climate, too, is against us, and masquerades have, in fact, degenerated into costume balls.

The one, we are about to describe, had however been got up with great care; every one had been requested to assist in keeping up the character of the amusement, and it promised to outvie its predecessors of many seasons.

As Grace passed on, her graceful figure, so [illegible] adapted to personify the Ophelia

Shakespeare, attracted much observation; and she found no small difficulty in making her way through the crowd. Now, she was requested for a flower, now, for a song; now, she was stayed to listen to a speech of Laertes, now to any speech that came first to the lips of the person, who, struck with her appearance, chose to address her. Heartily did she repent having chosen a character which, she fancied, subjected her to more attention than any other upon which she could have fixed.

Dancing commenced, and the crowd thickened. Grace felt almost bewildered by the blaze of light, the variety of dresses, and the continual and unconnected sounds that met her ear.

"See," exclaimed Falkland, "by Heaven, some bold mortal has dared to appear as Hamlet! Did I but fancy that he knew my Ophelia, I should feel inclined to quarrel with him for adopting a character, which—which I thought might appear presumption in myself." As he

spoke, he gently pressed the arm which leaned on his for support.

"I was not aware," replied Grace gravely, "that any construction was placed on the character a person might choose to appear in."

"Nor is there, my dear Miss Shafton. For instance, what construction could possibly be put upon your appearing as Ophelia? But you have not yet looked on Hamlet, and, certainly, he keeps up his character to the life."

Grace turned her eyes in the direction pointed out by Falkland, and beheld, leaning against a pillar, a tall, and very distinguished looking person, in the melancholy costume of Hamlet. She was struck by his air and whole appearance, which were in perfect unison with his dress."

"He looks it well, does he not?" asked Falkland.

"So well, that one would almost venture to pronounce he has some inward grief."

Falkland laughed. "Who is putting constructions now, fair Ophelia?"

Grace was prevented replying by the address of a splendidly dressed Sultan.

"Fair Ophelia, bestow one flower upon the humblest of your slaves."

"'There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; and there's pansies, that's for thoughts?'"

The Sultan seized the flowers. "The first I need not; for remembrance of Ophelia's charms can never fade; the second, which, if I mistake not, fair maidens call 'heart's ease,' I would accept from no other hands."

Grace expressed her wish to move on, which, with difficulty, they accomplished; but the Sultan was still by her side.

"Be not alarmed," whispered Falkland, "it is Lord Charles."

Grace felt reassured, and turned to speak to Mrs. Stanhope, but, to her chagrin, she was not to be seen; a troop of Swiss peasants had intervened, and completely separated them.

"Pray let us seek them," said Grace.

"We shall rejoin them instantly," replied Falkland; then, with a tenderness in his voice

which startled Grace, he added, "why do you, fear? I will protect you; would that I could ever have that privilege!"

"I do *not* fear," replied Grace hastily, "but I should much prefer keeping together."

"We will rejoin them the moment I discover where they are; and, truly, I see the ruff of Queen Elizabeth yonder; but how she has managed to get so far in advance of us, I cannot imagine; I thought they must have been behind us."

Grace felt relieved by seeing her friend, and they continued to press forward.

They had now reached the spot where Hamlet stood still, apparently immersed in gloomy thoughts. At this moment the Sultan again addressed a flattering speech to Ophelia, to which she endeavoured to reply, so as best to support her character.

At the sound of her voice, Hamlet started, and appeared intently observing her. There was something in his figure and manner, that powerfully attracted Grace's attention, and

awakened her curiosity. It made her rather reconciled to remain stationary, which was the more fortunate as, at this moment, the crowd which pressed round the dancers, who were performing some particular dance got up for the occasion, prevented the possibility of progression.

"When the dance is over, we shall be able to move on," said Falkland, "it is useless to attempt it at present."

Although the attention of Hamlet had been so forcibly drawn towards Grace, and he appeared to be solely occupied in observing her, yet he did not make any attempt to address her; and Grace felt herself tremble, she knew not why, as the eye of the unknown mask seemed to watch her every gesture. Why did the sight of this person conjure up an image she vainly endeavoured to forget? she knew not; but she felt that it did, and trembled with emotion.

"You are fatigued," said Falkland, "the

[illegible] this interminable dance is over, I will [illegible] you a seat."

The Doctor and Mrs. Stanhope were no less [illegible] than was Grace, at their separation; they looked round for her, but in vain. "It is provoking!" said Mrs. Stanhope. "But they will surely wait for us." As she was about to pass forward, a mask touched her on the arm, and whispered—"It is all right, I have found her out."

"Indeed!" replied Mrs. Stanhope, rather amused by his mistake, but not taking the trouble to undeceive him.

"Your Grace has grown suddenly indifferent," returned the mask. "A few minutes ago, you accused *me* of being so; but I have employed my time well; and, you will be delighted to hear that she has chosen the very character best suited to our purpose—she is here, actually, as Ophelia."

Mrs. Stanhope's attention was now fully aroused. She turned to look on the mask; he

was habited as an astrologer; his dress was exceedingly well arranged, with a long white beard descending to his middle.

"Could anything be better?" he continued, as he perceived that he had engaged her attention.

"And," asked Mrs. Stanhope, anxious to learn what this meant," what do you intend to do?"

"Oh, follow the plan we have, already, laid down. The greatest difficulty will be to separate her from Falkland; for he sticks as close as though he feared a plan was on foot to steal his treasure; but, I think, I shall manage it; I have a party quite at my disposal ready for any adventure I put them on, and with their aid—"

Mrs. Stanhope now felt seriously alarmed, "Where is she?" she asked.

"They have nearly reached the third drawing room; where, if I can get her to myself, I promise you, I will make her play off a scene

that will satisfy every one as to the truth of the report, that I have, with your Grace's assistance, so industriously circulated. She must have pretty strong nerves, if she withstand the shock; not that I wish to drive her mad really," he added, with a chuckle, "for that would not answer *my* purpose."

Mrs. Stanhope shook with rage, indignation, and alarm; but to conceal her agitation was indispensible; she was anxious to detain the plotter, anxious to know more. "Who did he mistake her for? some Duchess evidently, and there were, certainly, not more than two in the room."

"Is not Mrs. Stanhope with her?" she asked. "and Dr. Shafton—how is it she is alone with Falkland?"

"I suppose Mrs. Stanhope was desirous of giving Falkland an opportunity of playing the lover, which he is, evidently, taking advantage of; but it is all the better for us," and again he chuckled, "it is easier, you know, to get rid

of one than of three. Of course, the Doctor and Mrs. Stanhope are here, but I have not yet discovered in what characters. But I must be stirring: I suppose your Grace will soon return to your own party? Lady Georgiana is sitting in the boudoir listening, highly amused, to Sir Andrew Agué Cheek."

"And Lord Charles?" said Mrs. Stanhope, whose eyes now began to open.

"As usual, by the side of Ophelia. With all his lordship's art, I managed to discover his dress; and it was my only clue for finding out Miss Shafton; I knew he would be at her side. He fancies I am here as a gypsy, and so, notwithstanding his pains, I have deceived him. I have, even now, dispatched one in that dress to attract his attention. I know he will follow, and then I shall have only one to contend with." And here, in spite of Mrs. Stanhope's further effort to detain him, he moved on, and, in an instant, disappeared in the crowd. She turned hastily to the Doctor, and, in a hurried voice, begged him to press forward. "From what I

have just heard," she said, "I fear some annoyance is intended to our dear Grace."

Dr. Shafton needed not another word; he began to make his way through the crowd, with an anxiety equalled only by that of his companion.

In the mean time, Grace and Falkland moved forward, in pursuit of what they considered to be Mrs. Stanhope. The Sultan had suddenly left them in pursuit of a gypsy, and Grace hoped they would soon be enabled to rejoin their friends. They were making their way through the crowd, when Falkland was accosted by a Nun, who entreated the holy father to listen to her confession. He turned to reply, and in so doing, was not aware of the approach, from behind, of a party of sailors, who rushed onwards, and, as if by accident, separated Falkland from his precious charge. It took place so suddenly, that Grace, for the moment, did not perceive she was alone; when she did so, she was almost overcome by terror.

"Fear not, gentle Ophelia," said a voice

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"Fear not, gentle Ophelia," said a voice

close at her elbow, "you are parted from your friends, if you will accept my protection, I will instantly conduct you to them."

Grace turned to look at the speaker, and the venerable appearance of the astrologer, (for it was he) tempted her to accept his protection.

"If," she replied, "you really know where they are, and will be so kind, I shall feel truly obliged to you."

"Rely on me," and taking her hand he led her forward.

Grace still trembled. With eager eyes she tried to penetrate the crowd; though the appearance of the astrologer had attracted her, his voice, as he attempted to sooth her fears, and inspire her with confidence, grated harshly on her ear; but to encounter the crowd alone, was more than she had courage for.

As she looked eagerly around her, she, for the first time, perceived that she was closely followed by Hamlet; she saw that he watched her, and though unable to account for it, her courage returned.

The astrologer, who, even more quickly than Grace had done, perceived he was watched, appeared particularly annoyed; he manœuvred in vain; the intruder was still near them.

They had now arrived at the door of the conservatory; it was large and illuminated *à demi jour*. The astrologer attempted to lead Grace forward, but she stopped and said resolutely, "I am sure my friends are not here, excuse me, I see you do not know them, and I will return to seek them."

"Doubt not my knowledge, lovely Ophelia. Do you not know that I can see into futurity—withdraw the veil that conceals your future fate, and lay it open to your view."

"Excuse me, sir, you must observe my distress, at being separated from my party; and, therefore, must be aware that this is not the moment to play off your character," and Grace turned from him with a dignity, that, for the moment, awed him.

But the astrologer was not to be baffled, laying his hand upon Grace's arm, "Nay," he

said, "allow me to convince Miss Shafton that my knowledge is not altogether pretension; I will give her a proof of my abilities that will soon convince her my character is not a feigned one. It needed not the character you have chosen, to reveal your fate to me."

"Sir," replied Grace, greatly agitated, but supported by pride and indignation; "if you know me, I am still more surprised at your wish to insult me. Let go my arm, sir, I can seek my friends without your help!"

"Not till you have heard what I have to say; and I warn you, you had best listen to me in private, or I may reveal that you will wish no other ears had listened to. Come, be persuaded, your friends are enjoying the freshness of the atmosphere here," and he pointed towards the conservatory, "if not, I pledge myself—"

"If," said a voice that thrilled to the heart of Grace, "if, Madam, you will trust to the protection of a stranger, I shall be most happy to assist you in seeking your party. They are not, I am convinced, within the conservatory.

Before the stranger had ceased speaking, Grace had almost seized his arm, which she clung to for support. She spoke not, but the action was sufficient, and Hamlet, for he it was, moved on.

The astrologer, who was, for a moment, silenced by astonishment, now recovered his voice, and, in a loud and insolent tone, evidently intended to attract attention, said—

"By what right, Sir, do you interfere and force from my protection, a lady who, of her own accord, accepted and placed herself there?"

"Because," replied Hamlet with a stern and haughty demeanour, "I know you, Sir, and I should not consider any lady safe under such protection." He endeavoured to hasten on, for the crowd was beginning to surround them, attracted by the loud and angry tones of the astrologer

"Sir, I defy you," returned the latter, "and, if you do not instantly resign that lady—"

Grace clung still closer to the arm of her protector, and felt almost fainting. Hamlet,

who perceived the Astrologer was bent upon a scene, turned to him, and said between his teeth, in a tone of voice there was no mistaking—

"If Mr. Talbot does not instantly disappear, he will meet with that exposure his vile machinations so richly deserve."

Talbot waited not a second warning; muttering something that was not intended to be audible, he slunk away, and allowed Grace and her protector to proceed without further annoyance.

"Pray, be composed," said Hamlet to the shrinking, trembling girl, "you have no longer any thing to fear; I saw you divided from your—friend, and am convinced it was by no accident."

Grace shuddered. "How much I thank you," she said, "for your kind ready interference; but who is that fearful man, and what were his intentions?"

Hamlet made no reply for some time; at

last, he said, "he appears to be one who delights in the misery of others; but he will soon be detected.—Your *friend*, I think, is in the character of a monk?"

"Yes, one of our party, but—" with an exclamation of delight, "I see my dear father, he is anxiously looking for me."

The Doctor, at the same moment, caught sight of his child; he hurried forward, and, with difficulty, refrained trom catching her in his arms. Mrs. Stanhope, though almost equally alarmed, displayed more prudence, and restrained the Doctor's feelings.

"My dear child!" cried the Doctor.

"My dearest Grace," echoed Mrs. Stanhope, "how you have alarmed us! where is Falkland?"

"The crowd divided us, and had it not been for this gentleman," she turned to introduce her protector--but the stranger had vanished! "He is gone!" she exclaimed, in surprise.

The Doctor and Mrs. Stanhope now over-

whelmed her with enquiries, to all of which she could only reply, "I have been so much alarmed, pray let us go; indeed I have been dreadfully annoyed.

The Doctor found that Grace was indeed scarcely able to support herself; and he, also, urged their speedy retreat; but Mrs. Stanhope represented the necessity of finding Falkland: it would be cruel to leave him to the alarm and uncertainty in which he must be.

It was not long before they saw him, eagerly pushing his way, and apparently unconscious of the observation he excited. One party cried out, "the holy father is in haste; he is called suddenly to confess some wealthy old sinner!" Another wondered that so holy a man should press forward with so much indecorum, which was said by a third, to be in strict keeping with the character; adding, "make way for Tuck!" The rooms were not, however, so crowded as they had been, and Falkland soon perceived the object of his search. In an instant he was at her side.

"Thank Heaven!" he exclaimed, "thank Heaven, I have found you; and under the protection of your own friends. I have been dreadfully alarmed, for I fancied our separation could scarcely have arisen from accident; believe me, I could not avoid it. I was so surrounded, immediately by the party of sailors who were the cause of it, and who tried every means to detain me, that it was impossible for me to rejoin you; I trust you acquit me of negligence, God knows I have been half wild."

"Oh, say no more!" replied Grace, "I am sure, it was not in your power to avoid it." Her voice was so faint as to be scarcely articulate; and with one accord, they moved forward.

The rooms, though somewhat thinner, were still crowded. Grace's eye wandered over the motley groups; she sought for one form, but it was no longer to be seen; her heart sank, and her exhausted frame seemed scarcely equal to the exertion of getting through the scene that had been so fraught with annoyance and emotion.

CHAPTER XVI.

We must now return to de Courcy, of whom we have lost sight since the memorable evening of his parting with Grace.

Torn by a thousand conflicting emotions—the most painful of which was the certainty that she, whom he had just left, was doomed to the dreadful malady to which her parent had fallen a victim—he rapidly retraced his steps to the hall. This belief had been produced in him so carefully and artfully—for Talbot had found agents so well suited to his purpose, that a strong impression was certain—that de Courcy

looked upon Grace with eyes so prejudiced, that he attributed her naturally startled manner, during the interview, to that cause. Want of rest, agony, and continual apprehension had undermined the health of his understanding (if the expression may be pardoned) and he saw, through a biassed medium, the consistent and dignified demeanour of Grace.

Immediately on his return, he summoned Larry.

"Let every thing be ready for my departure at daybreak," he said.

Poor Larry, who had been looking forward to an interview with Jessy, in the morning, was struck "all of a heap" with astonishment, at his master's order.

"Is it the morrow mornin' your lordship's making illusion to?" he asked, depicting in his '*tout ensemble*' the consternation that filled the inner man.

"Why do you ask, sir? Are you dissatisfied with your situation? You can go! you ca.

go! I keep no one against their inclination! The steward will settle with you! You can go at once!" Each of these exclamations was pronounced so sternly and passionately, and in a tone so unusual, that Larry felt his heart leap within him. Once or twice he made an effort to answer, but could not master his emotion sufficiently to get out a word; he felt half choked; while his master, attributing his silence to sullenness, continued in a calmer and colder tone, infinitely more afflicting to his faithful follower:—

"I did not expect—why should I look for—more than duty from you? You have fulfilled it in every way! I will write you a character under my own hand and seal!" And, in the vague impetuosity of his feelings, he seized a pen.

This was too much for Larry; he made a gesture of the arm, as if to prevent his master from his purpose, and then fairly burst into tears.

"You arn't a-going to kill me, my lord, are you?" he exclaimed at last, "by drivin' me from you, as if I was no better than a tracherous spanil dog?"

"I thought you seemed not to relish my order, Larry." answered de Courcy, "and I am not in a humour to make allowance for anything or anybody. Please yourself—I leave this country to-morrow! if you dislike to accompany me; send François—I forget, François is not here—no matter! Tomkins can look out for somebody—"

"Oh, my lord, my lord, don't go on for to tear the heart out o' me! Sure, an' if it is that your lordship isn't a-wary o' me, and anxious to be shut of me, it's I that arn't a going to countenance any body, barrin' myself, to tind upon your lordship, and folly you to the confines o' creation and beyant aither! And it's distressed I am, my lord, that you had a rason for suspicting me of desarting you at this prisint moment, when the throuble o' the heart is heavy on your lordship—the Lord sind his

holy angels to lighten it, andremove the 'casion! and it was nothin', my lord, but the laste taste of surprise like, that had howld o' me, when your lordship mintshind your intintion of travellin', and may be, your honor cot the imprission of it on my face—for surely, my lord, I need not repate, that there isn't a inch of the varsal globe that I wouldn't travil afther your lordship, not lavin' out even the Anti-Paddies, though I might be excused a-shewing myself there, seeing as how the animosity of the citizens is desperate hot aginst all Irish thravellers. And sure, sure, it was only waitin' I was to ask your lordship at what hour in the mornin' your lordship would have the carriage at the doore."

"At five o'clock, and come to my room an hour before—and Larry, forget that I shewed myself unkind to you, I did not mean to hurt your feelings, my good fellow, but my own were too poignant to admit of my considering those of another!"

"Ah hush, my lord, sure you did'nt say a word conthrary to kindness. I wouldn't believe it! It was my stupid fashin of conductin' myself, that naturally riz your lordship's resintmint aginst me."

"Well, have it as you will, Larry, and go and get what sleep you can, before it is time to call me.—Good night!"

Larry knew better than to answer; he, therefore, wished his master a good night's rest, and retired to make preparations for the journey. "What is a sinding him, in this unprecedinted manner, out o the counthry, I wondher? it passes my b'lief intirely, intirely!—an' how frantic he is! marciful mother! how he looked at me! his eyes went through an' through me like a pair of carriage lamps on a dark road: and, Hivins above, how pale he's got and unsettled like in his actshins—it's murdering me to see him take on so, it is! hush! what's that? there it is agin! he's a wanderin' up and down that barrack of a room, instid o'

courting his natural repose. Och, its' bothered he is intirely, about something parsonal! I'd give a quarter's wages to diskivir the rason of it, I would! Hark at him how he stamps! The healing of Heaven make him safe and sound agin as a Traymoor roach; for it's mighty black and ugly the misfortune is that's a way-laid him—an' bad look, I say, bad look and consternation, and amazemint, (which is all as one the same sort o' damidge,) to the saviges that have been a-worryin' him—an' I pray the vargin for a sure and sudden vingeance on 'em —one particular fit and adapted to their desarts; divil burn 'em—amin! an' amin, agin, oh Lord!"

De Courcy proceeded to Paris where he past a couple of months: thence to Rome where he spent the winter, without, however, interesting himself in one glory of the place. At the beginning of spring, he left the holy city proceeding towards Naples by Velletri, and the Pontine Marshes.

At Bocca di fiume, where he put up for a

relay of horses, he had the pleasure of meeting a most intimate friend, Count Rosano, travelling in strict incognito, in consequence of having killed, in a duel, the only son of a great Lombard nobleman. They agreed to travel together, since chance had thrown them into each other's society.

Larry was equally fortunate. He lit upon a neighbour's daughter, one Kitty Cantlon, who found her way to the inn during the performance of a penance, imposed on her poor mother, for having forgotten the respect due to the character of a priest, in the contemptible person of little Father C———y, that pigmy blot upon the really estimable clergy of the church of Erin, as Lawless used to call it. Kitty accompanied her mother, who perished on the pilgrimage; leaving one unfortunate child in the midst of a strange country, and another in Ireland, both free to seek their fortune—which, in the language of the land of potatoes, means begging "the bit and sup" from door to door.

"Why then, is it yourself I contimplate, a standing forenint me, with a furrin milk-pail on the top of your iligant head, Kitty Cantlon?" demanded Larry, who discovered his acquaintance in the precints of the cow-shed. "Look, at me, 'oman! don't you know me? Is't a-going for to deny your knowlidge of Larry Monaghan you are, at this time o' day? Sure, you don't mane to palm off sich a transaction on the boy that played with you in the Douglas meadows?"

"The Lord keep us in the sinsis!" ejaculated Kitty, "and is it your rale self that's there, or only your fetch?"

"I'm bowld to say it's myself undoubtedly, Kitty; and its clane surprised I am at the undiskiverableness of your memory!" and he made a feint to retire.

"Oh, Larry, Larry, shtay, agra! shtay! I'm coming to myself rapidly! And how are you, Larry Monaghan, for it is yerself to the fore, sartinly? and how are the people? and

your mother? God bless her! and my sister Judeen, the cratur? and, yera, tell me, is the bit of a cottage howlding itself up this winthry weather?"

"Out wid ye! out wid ye! now Kitty! sure an' I'll tell you nothin' till I salute you with the kiss of pace in the stranger's land! (and he suited the action to the word.) And it's bad news, afther all, Kitty darling! the mother is lyin' in the Bottomy Gardens, and the people are dispirsed like, by agitation and immigration: and Judeen, God bless her! is gone and married a sodger, who found his way into Evergreen on a St. John's eve, and he's evaded the country with her, and tuck her to Portingale or Sallymanky, or some sich powder-pelting place: and the cottage is a-lyin' in dusht and ashes, as a person may say, an' more's the pity! it held itself up as long as she held herself out agiust the persuadableness of the sodger, and it fell in the idintical minit she

gave in. And the praty gardin is runnin' rantin wild wid weeds; and, as I said, Kitty, there's nothin' but heavy news from the home. But it's bloomin' an' beautiful you're looking yerself, an' upon my conscience, it does my heart a dale o' good to lay the eyes upon your shinin' countenance!

"And, in troth, the pleasure's mutual, Larry darlin'; and the politeness aqual; for it's glad at my sowl I am, as the racin' tares bear witness, to clap my two pair o' eyes upon you. And it's a wonderful change for the betther is obsarvible in you, God love you for ever, amin! And what are you doin' here abouts, Larry? thravellin' by coorse?"

"Yes, I'm in the *shute* of the great Earl de Coorcey, the laneal descindant of de Coorcey, who defated the enormous Normin joint in the airly ages o' the world; and it's a thrue an' lovible man he is, and Irish to the back-bone, thank God for it! an' its a soort of flyin' tower we're taking in these Roman-tic places."

"And which way do you go from here, Larry? and who is your posthillin?" asked Kitty somewhat mysteriously.

"We're goin' to Naples, I b'lieve, as straight as this vagarying road will let us; and a black-headed boy, called Yakipo, is one o' the posthillins," answered Larry.

"Then the Lord have mercy on ye, for it's a black-hearted, as well as black headed, murtherin villin that same Yakipo is!" returned Kitty. "Come hither to me!" and she led Larry into the cow-shed. "Keep your weather eye open, Larry, and watch the vagabind's manoovers; and, when you sees anythin' unusual about him, jist bate in his ugly skull—that's all, and turn posthillin your own self, if you care about the masther's safety. That Yakipo is no better than a Brigandier pick-pocket, and the hotel keeper is no betther than is convanient. Listen to me, now, when you get into that bit of the road where the imminse trees is, have all the difinsive weapons next to

your hand, and give the masther the laste taste iv a notice to keep him awake like; then thry to get "cheek by jowl" with Yakipo; histe yerself on the horse along side iv him, and, if he takes occasion to make a bit of a whishtle—make an ind of him immadiately. Then drive the bastes like fury; don't wait for anything; I tell you, it will be wise and worth while to rowl off. But, if the informin' tief should whishtle, before you can prevint him, and a throop of robbers rish out on the road upon you, fight like a man, while there's a chance, and whin there's not a chance, and the masther is in cruel danger, jist folly my advice, if there's any possibility of doin' it. Make a little run down the road unobsarved, and bawl, at the tip-top of your voice—'I soldati!' three times."

"What is it agin?" asked Larry.

"I soldati!" answered Kitty, "it manes the sodgers."

"Does it in airnest?" said Larry, "what

it's about time for me to settle Yakipo's." said Larry in mental soliloquy. "We'll have the gang o' divils down upon us now in a jiffey; and it's proper an' fit to take the shine out o' that rinigade of a posthilin immadiately; and see, holy mother, if he aint beginnin' his *gachees*—and this is the idintical grove in the road, that the cratur Kitty pinted out to me. Asy a bit, asy a bit, Yakipo, I'm salting the gruel for you, agra!" and he thrust a brace of horse pistols into his belt—he had, previously, stript himself to his flannel jacket, in the desire to have the free swing of his arms. He now poked his head into the opening of the britscha, and, with a soft "whisht" to his master—

"It's a going to be murthered and plunthered we are, my lord, he said, and I'm thinking it would be more convanient for your Lordship and the Count to have the cap o' the chay thrown back, so that you might get elbow room. The lading posthillin is no better than is nat'ral to him, and I'm going to take the man-

idgement o' them hosses on myself. And, my lord, here are the sabres and the additional pistils, and I enthrate your lordship not to be afeard, but that we'll bang them like '*bannaler*.'"

He now softly unloosed the fastening of the head of the carriage, and slid it noiselessly back, without the first postillion noticing it: then, creeping like a mouse, along the side and steps, and over the back of the wheeler, with a spring *a la* Ducrow, he fairly seated himself on the off leader.

"Christo, dio! che c' è?" shrieked the terrified postillion.

"None o' your parson Saxe here, you baste!" said Larry, as he struck him to the ground. "Take that as a meminto of what I'd give you if I wasn't in sich a hurry!" then, turning round to the fellow behind him, and presenting a pistol at him, he roared out "leather away, leather away, if it's a livin' man you wish to be by morning!"

"Che volete, che volete? Signor?" cried the

postillion terribly affrighted at Larry's proceedings, and shivering like an aspen.

"Lave off shamming, and tich up the hosses, you unsanctified 'bob-a-mile.'*—Look sharp, I say to you," and he shook the hand that held the deadly weapon.

"Oh miseracordia! cosa vuole, mio Signor?"

"Blood-an'-'ouns! give over caterwauling, and do as I bid you—do, do, or you're dead!" and Larry gave desperate emphasis to the words—"do, do, or you're dead!" My uncle Toby would have written a paragraph about it, we are content to credit our readers' imaginations.

Rosano, from the carriage, now interposed and ordered the postillion to spur on with all possible speed, if he disliked being blown to the devil.

Thus admonished, he joined Larry in his vocation, who was already whipping, spurring, and

* A nick name for jarvies whose fare is a shilling (vulgarly bob) per mile.

exhorting the leaders to "put on as if they were in a hurry," frequently twirling himself about to enliven the left wheeler with an application of whip cord, and, as frequently, to make the amende honorable, assuring it sundry gratifications, in the way of oats, meal, grains, &c., &c., with a profuseness approaching to prodigality.

It was plain, however, that the horses did not understand him, or, as he said himself, "were in the plot fetlock deep," for they were equally deaf to blows, and promises; and deliberately refused to change their pace. Larry was in despair.

At this juncture, the whistle of the dislodged postillion rang out piercingly shrill and distinct.

"Divil burn you for coppuls!"* exclaimed Larry, "see what ye've done; drawn the sartinty of destruction killing plain upon us; so ye have, ye decateful varmin!" Then preparing himself for action, he threw the reins on the horses' necks, and cocked his pistols.

* Horses.

Presently, eight or nine brigands made their appearance; four of whom, discharged their carbines at our travellers. One ball, only, took effect—the wretched postillion rolled to the earth, mortally wounded.

"Now, my Lord! now, my Count!" roared Larry, catching enthusiasm from the report of the carbines—"Show them the advantage of being born in ould Ireland! Fire away my Lord!" as he saw the flash of de Courcy's pistol—"shoot, my noble Count, and Father O'Reilly's blessin' on the bullets! And now," he continued, discharging a pistol, "now, is manners!"

Two of the bandits had sprung to the heads of the leaders, and grasped the bridles. "Bravo, camerado!" cried one, mistaking Larry for Jacopo.

"Call people by their vartuous christian names, do, you unhanged sassenachs!" he shouted, blazing away, with his remaining pistol, in the ruffian's face, while, with the stock of the other, he contused his companion's skull.

"The Monaghans for ever! Fust blood, fust blood! Hurraw!"

De Courcy and Rosano, having discharged their pistols, sprang out of the carriage, and immediately were engaged with the robbers, who, not expecting so sudden a check, had not yet reloaded. They were, however, desperate swordsmen and powerful bodied ruffians, and being now joined by one or two more of the gang, were fearful odds to encounter. De Courcy and his companion might hope to defend themselves for a short while—it was impossible they could escape with life. Larry saw this in an instant, and immediately determined to have recourse to Kitty's stratagem. He leaped to the ground unobserved, crept stealthily for a few yards down the road, and set up shouting, "I soldati! i soldati!" in a tremendous voice; and then hurried back to the scene of action. He found his master almost overpowered by two assailants, whose repeated blows were fast beating down his

guard. Larry, seeing his critical position, jumped like a wolf on the back of the most formidable of the two: fastened himself about his neck, something in the manner of the old man of the mountain, and (as he worded it in his relation,) "insisted upon his coming to the floore."

De Courcy, relieved by this most timely interference, soon succeeded in repelling his other opponent with some painful *souvenirs*, and was hurrying to render assistance to Rosano, when he found that they were masters of the field. Rosano was leaning on his sword, and Larry was finishing his vengeance on the fellow he had dragged to the earth.

The Brigands, who are kept in constant danger of surprise, by the late judicious arrangements of the Neapolitan Government—viz. posting a company of soldiers at every half mile, and who, now, never presume to attack travellers, without sending spies in every direction to give instant notice, fled precipitately at

Larry's signal, which came from the quarter where he had heard the exclamation of the scout, as mentioned a few pages back.

Hurrying his master and Rosano into the britscha, Larry again mounted, and, this time, played so successfully that the horses, already thoroughly frightened by the affray, went off at a "wonderful pace, brathing like clarinets and rattling the sthones out of the sthreet (Larry would have it that a paved road was a street) like corn out of an oat bin," bringing them, without further interruption, to Mesa, where they put up until morning.

De Courcy and Rosano, having consumed a few weeks in Naples, departed for Paris, where the former found letters, one of which immediately determined his return to England.

END OF VOL. I.

T. C. Newby, Printer, 65, Mortimer Street, Cavendish Square.

[redacted]

THE M.D.'S DAUGHTER,

A NOVEL

OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY,

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

T. & W. BOONE, 29, NEW BOND STREET.

1842.

T. C. Newby, Printer, 65, Mortimer Street, Cavendish Squ

THE M.D.'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER I.

The moment Larry arrived in London, he posted off to Mrs. Mc. Walker's. He felt convinced that there was something brewing against his master's happiness, and, at all risks, he was determined to discover, and, if possible, defeat it.

It was about twelve o'clock in the day, and, being Saturday, Bess was cleaning the steps. So intent was she in her occupation, that she did not immediately perceive Larry.

"Is it for cuttin' me dead, you are, Bessy, that you fasten your eyes on thim insinsible shtones there, agra?"

"Mercy on us! is that you James? Lauks, how you frit me to be sure!"

"Niver fear, you'll come round subsiquintly, as the Doctors say—God presarve us from'em! And now, tell me, how have you been all the time that I couldn't come to you? and arn't you jumpin' with joy to clap eyes on me agin, you purty little angelist? Come along with me to the Crown, do, an' let's have a royal thimblefull of something together. Yerra lave the baste of a bucket to find its way in doores of its own accords, an' come along, for I am hard set for time now, an' it's only this blessed mornin' that I've returned from a contininta tower; and dyin' mad I am (as the premises show) to have a little discoorse with you. Come, then, alannan, come."

"Oh, I mustn't leave the pail and the scrubbing brush, and the hearthstone here; they'll be took by some one in want of such partiklars, perhaps."

"An' p'r'aps, they wont Bessy; an', surely,

my society will clare the risk. Come along young 'oman, without spilin' any more time, and agonizin' of my anxiety an' affection for you."

"Oh, James, how you do talk a person into obliging you!"

"It's a way I have about me, acushla, in common with the whole kit o' my relations. Come then, come away with you, decaver." And off they went to the Crown.

Soon seated in a convenient corner, Larry and Bessy got so thick into conversation, that they forgot every thing and every body; and even failed to notice the entrance of a man into the parlour, and his inserting himself in the box next to them. As Larry was earnest in his manner and language, it did not require a pair of the Messrs. Soloman's voice conductors to catch the expression of his ideas.

Bessy, at Larry's request, commenced telling him all that had transpired during his absence. She said that a Mr. Talbot had frequently

called on Mrs. Mc Walker; and, she knew, had given her various large sums of money:—"and it was all about swearing that a young lady wasn't sound of mind, and that her mother had died raving mad. The Mc Walkers," she continued, "think nothink of an oath; for Mr. Mc Walker says, that 'Perjury' is only another name for the most useful and friendly service one human being can render to another."

"The murtherin defamer!" growled Larry. "An' did they swear away the young cratur's pace?"

"To be sure they did, 'cause they were paid for it! And it was to that gentleman that came in the cab that morning, and who was a real lord, that Mrs. Mc Walker declared that she had attended on one Mrs. Shuffleton, or Shifton, or some such name as that."

"It's all one!" said Larry, "lave out the names, they only spind time."

"Well, she swore that she had attended this Mrs. Shifton, who was the mother of the young

lady, on her death bed; and told him how wild she was, and how she shrieked and bit every body. And how her husband, Dr. Shifton, was so deep and cunning in trying to hush the affair up. And how he went into a remote part of the country, taking the young maniac with him, and nursing her up till the time when she was to burst out like her mother. Oh, James, wasn't it wicked of Mrs. Mc Walker to say so, knowing it all to be false? But she's a very deceitful woman I thinks!"

"I b'leive you're right, Bessy! Well an' what thin? I'm curos to hear the whole ins an' outs of it."

"Well, in the afternoon of that same day, Mr. Talbot came again, and he stayed more than two hours; and Mr. Mc Walker was at home (though he kept out of the way when the lord was there); and a great deal of amusement they had among themselves. And, oh, James, they conversed on things that would make the hair of your head stand on end,—only that yours

I see is curly, and it mightn't have such an effect upon it. Well, and Mr. Talbot, though an awful bad man hisself, expressed hisself entirely astonished at the wonderful distance that there was between him and Mr. MacWalker. And, then, Mr. Talbot, having given a great deal more money, shook hands with Mr., and Mrs. Mac Walker, and went away: I saw it all, for I was keeping watch at the key hole."

"Well, an' what happened after this?"

"Why Mr. Mac Walker wrote, several times, to Mr. Talbot for more and more money;—threatening him that, if he did not oblige him, he would let out the secret to lord de Courcy;—aye, that was the real name."

"I towld you to lave out names, Bessy; sure they're quite insignificant to me!" exclaimed Larry, in a voice of reproof. "Well, go on, and what did the other do?"

"Oh, he sent cheque after cheque, until they might have had a mint of money; only that they spent it twice as fast as it came. Such

shameful extravagance, James, I did'nt think possible!"

"Well, and what follows?" enquired Larry, keeping the girl to the subject.

"Why, just now, they want more money again, and I have to put this note in the penny post office—" She, here, handed the letter to Larry, who began spelling the superscription. In raising her eyes, whilst he was thus employed, they fell on the face of the person in the adjoining box! She uttered a scream of horror, and rushed out of the room, exclaiming "It's Mr. Mac Walker, hisself, or it's the Devil!"

Larry, left alone with the vagabond that had trafficked with his master's happiness, felt undecided whether to spring upon him, and 'dance the life out of him', or not; but upon consideration, he saw that there would be nothing gained by that proceeding, so he judged it better to smother his wrath. He therefore rose to retire, and was making towards the door for

that purpose, when Mr. MacWalker interrupted him, saying, in the softest and most insinuating manner,—

"My dear Sir, I trust that you do not give credit to the vile slander of that wretched girl."

"Who gave you permission to call me dear Sir?" demanded Larry in a stern voice. "I never laid my eyes on you before; and I'll take care never to soil 'em again by so doing, Mr. Mac Walker!"

"Ah, I see that your excellent and worthy heart is prejudiced against me. It is thus (and he cast his eyes toward the ceiling) that, through my whole life, I have lost friend after friend, by the machinations of the very persons who ought rather to render me love and service than their contraries animosity and injury. That creature, I assure you, Sir, has received more attention and kindness at my hands, than masters are generally in the habit of bestowing on their menials."

"More than they *ought* to bestow, I suppose you mane?" interrupted Larry, "Let me pass now, Mr. Mac Walker, let me pass, I say to you, or, may be, I'll be walking over you, if you don't!"

"Do not be angry with me I beg. Truly, I am unconscious of having said one word calculated to offend! Reflect, I request and beseech you, reflect whether I have used one ungentlemanly or unconventional expression, that politeness and good friendly feeling would condemn. Allow me, therefore, to explain to you what this foul slanderer has been pouring in your ear. She has tried to hoax you, my friend; on my honour and on my soul, she has! I call heaven to witness the truth of my words! Do not, therefore, do not wrong a man, who, in the short period that he has had the honour of your valuable acquaintance, has never in thought, or word, or action, injured the most minute hair of your head!"

"Haven't you gone and taken away the cha-

racter and pace in life of a young lady, God bless her,"—

"Amen!" fervently responded Mr. McWalker.

"Hare me out, sir, before you intherrupt me! A young lady, I repate, whose name you arn't fit to mintion, let alone soarin' so high as to go slanderin' of it. Haven't you broke the heart of the noblest masther the sun of Heaven ever shon' upon?—Let me pass, then! I'm not to be desaved by you. I know the truth of what I say."

"You are, then—forgive me if I err—in the employment of lord de Courcy?" enquired Mc Walker.

"I'm his head valley, and what have you to say to it? What have you to say aginst him, or aginst me?" cried Larry, rising in energy and anger. "What have you to say, I say, you common informer and blood merchant?"

"Hush, hush, my dear sir, you'll excite the public curiosity. Allowing what you say to be, in some particulars, correct, let me ask you, if

you do not think I could more beneficially serve your master—for whom I entertain the highest esteem and respect—Hear me! (as Larry made a violent attempt at interruption) "Do you not think, I reiterate, that I could immeasurably serve him, by a discovery of the vile plot which has been practised against him, and in which I took a part, purely on purpose to have the great pleasure and singular satisfaction of exposing the principals in the nefarious procedure? You will remember, and the girl allows, that I was not at home, when his lordship did Mrs. Mac Walker the very profound honour of calling upon her. I was then, Sir, absent on a professional tour, lecturing on subjects of the highest of all possible consideration to the human fraternity, for whom I toil all night and all day!" and he tried to look the pale and patient philosopher, but it was a hideous burlesque; for his figure was corpulent, his face bloated, and he belied the appearance of the character in every thing except the gray

head—Yes, Reader, this execrable miscreant had a gray head! But, thank God, I shall feel well repaid, if, as the last, and not least willing, victim, my philanthrophic endeavours may help to restore a new and *social* state of existence—a 'Harmonic' unity of intercourse; doing away with the reserve of rule, and other worm-eaten regulations. My theory, Sir, argues thus—"

"Let me pass," roared Larry, now wound up to a pitch of danger, "Let me pass, or by"——and he was lifting his clenched hand, when Mr. Mac Walker, with the air of an injured man, retreated—but *towards the door.*

"Do not, do not, be violent!" he said, "surely, you cannot blame me for my thrilling anxiety to rescue both my name and character from the aspersions that have been flung on it."

"Do you mane to oppose my laving this room?" demanded Larry, in one of those terrible whispers of deliberate determination peculiar to the Irish people.

"Not for the world, Sir, not for the world,"

replied Mc Walker in a soothing tone, "I was only about to open the door for you. But--but--"

"But what?"

"Why I would mildly suggest that you hold in your possession, a letter which, as you have been told, belongs to me; having, indeed, been written, by my own hand, a few hours since. I beg, therefore, that you will have the goodness to return it to me."

"Catch a weasel nappin'! (said Larry) an' how dare you for to lay claim to a letther, which was confided to my keepin', by another person? Wheuw! it's trasonable, is it? My mind's made up! You'll as soon get the grace of Heaven, by the unholy coorse you lade, as get this same letther out o' my howlding, Mr. Mac Walker! I'll give it to nobody, barrin' the young 'oman that placed it in my charge."

"Then, let me beg of you, my dear Sir, to have the kindness to accompany me to the house opposite, No. 12, in which I reside; and, there, we shall find the servant; and you can fulfill the

trust, that you have so nobly and faithfully performed."

"What—what do you take me for—that I'd allow myself to be seen walking in conjunction with a Hatheist, an informer, and an author of undacent pamplets? Faix, you're under a Devil's delusion! Come, stir, stir, lave the handle o' the doore alone, and let me out; or, by the holy poker, I'll make you unfit for any earthly duty 'cept lyin' in a lump!" He now prepared, in reality, for work, and, grasping Mac Walker by the shoulder, was about to use a little roughness, when the other suddenly pulled forth a small phial from the pocket of his waistcoat, and flinging the contents at Larry's face, exclaimed, in an altered and demoniacal voice—

"*Darkness to your eyes and heart!*"

Nimbly jumping to one side, Larry contrived to avoid the discharge; of which some dropped on his coat and the remainder on the ground. What was his supprise and horror to observe

the part of the coat, on which the fluid had fallen, suddenly change its colour to a bright green, and steam as if on fire! For a moment, thunderstruck and bewildered, he could hardly credit his senses; until Mac Walker, seizing the opportunity, made a dart at the letter, and must inevitably have succeeded in wrenching it from Larry's grasp, if the latter had not conceived such a deep loathing for him that, the instant he felt the touch of his hand, it recalled him to himself. With a blow that might have brained a bull, he dashed the miscreant to the ground—

"God's curse cling to you (he exclaimed, fiercely); you visible divil!"

The people of the tavern, attracted by the rumpus, now made their appearance; and, perceiving Mac Walker, whom they mortally disliked, from the fact of his never dealing with them—he being a tea-totaller, in consequence of requiring a clear head to conduct the business of his daily villany—prostrate on the floor,

and Larry flourishing his arms like a gladiator, immediately formed themselves into a ring, in the hope to see the former punished.

Recovering himself in a few moments, Mac Walker arose, and, perceiving, in the countenances of the bystanders, the inclination of their hearts, prudently shuffled his way through them, muttering a few almost inaudible threats of judicial investigations, warrants, etc., etc.—which he would rather have perished than put into force: his grand and principal dread being the attracting of the public eye. Stunned by a regale of groans and horrible hootings, which were prolonged in the bar, and taken up, in full chorus, by the chance children of poverty without, he found his way, with a singularly sudden facility, to the door of No. 12, where he broke through the infant multitudes that squalled around him, inserted a latch-key in the door—and was lost to sight.

Larry, shewing the phial and his coat to the people present, acquainted them with the cir-

cumstances; concealing, however, all mention of the letter, which, he had a shrewd notion, would afford his master a fair clue to the villany that had been practised against him. After treating the company, who advised him to bring an action against Mac Walker, for the fiendish attempt to burn out his eyes, Larry made his escape, hurrying home, in high glee, with the letter.

He did not wait a moment, on his return, but, tearing away the envelope of the letter, in order that his master might have no objection to read the contents, he rushed into his lordship's presence.

"Well, sir!" asked lord de Courcy rather angrily, "what does this mean?"

"Manes victory, my lord! I've fought for you, an' I've burnt to death for you! an' I've conkered for you—hurraw!"

"Explain yourself Larry," said his master, "explain yourself, and be gone; I am in no humour for jesting."

"Jesting? oh murther, is it *only* jesting I'd be? Why it's start-staring-mad and inflammathory, I'm become! Joy has took sich a howld of me, my lord, that I'm 'tossicated. There, your honour, there's the ticket of relase! Read it out, my lord, read it out, in the name o'mercy, and for the sake of the faithful boy whose eyesight you are! It's the portrait and frontispiece of as purty a piece of vagabindism as ever was concookted atwuxt* two unnateral bussoms."

Lord de Courcy, surprised at his earnest manner, commenced reading the letter aloud to oblige him. Larry listened with an attention that would have transported a twelve-book Epic bard into a charming consciousness of the absorbing interest of his pages. From the contents of the letter, the reader will be able to judge of lord de Courcy's astonishment.

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* Anglice—Betwixt.

12, Old Devonshire Street.

'DEAR SIR,

'In the absence of a communication from you, which is, *indeed*, a surprise to myself and Mrs. Mac Walker—'

"This letter is not for me, Larry!" cried his master.

"Go on, my lord, for the love of Heaven; and begin it agin, that I may folly the sinse of it, if it's got any. It's all lawful my lord—read on, I enthrate of you!"

De Courcy, to please his curiosity—commenced again—

'DEAR SIR,

'In the absence of a communication from you, which is, *indeed*, a surprise to myself and to Mrs. Mac Walker, I presume to call your attention to the subjoining most lucid statement of the question at issue between us.

'In June last, you waited on Mrs. Mac Walker, and sounded her on her willing-

ness to serve you:—I will be plain with you, for I fear you forget the particulars of that service.

'You required that Mrs. Mac Walker should impose upon lord de Courcy, then deeply enamoured of Miss Shafton, a lady upon whom you had fixed your own wishes—you, I repeat, required Mrs. Mac Walker to impose herself upon lord de Courcy as being the nurse, who had attended Mrs. Shafton's accouchement; and to swear to the hereditary insanity of her family, (then fearfully evident in the suffering lady). At your suggestion, she undertook to fix upon lord de Courcy's mind, a belief that madness must rage in the system of Miss Shafton.

'This has been done! lord de Courcy has broken his engagement with Miss Shafton, and is now travelling on the Continent, a desperate and miserable man; and you have had a free field opened for you to prosecute your design upon the young lady.

'My dear Sir, is all this nothing? Gratitude is the bond of union; and this you should never forget. For all this service you have made me a few paltry payments—excuse me—but, under the circumstances, they appear absolutely contemptible. I would be judged by any unbiassed person, if the payment be not shamefully inproportionate to the service rendered.

'Now, Sir, an early and *proper* return to this communication—will *preserve your secret.*

'I am, dear Sir,

'Still devotedly yours—

'ELLSHENDER MAC WALKER.

'J. C. TALBOT, ESQ. 'Saturday Morning, A.M.'
Sackville Street, Piccadilly.'

"Oh, murther! murther! murther! was there iver?" ejaculated Larry, when his master had finished reading, "Is there no Notey Beney, my lord?"

"There is not a postcript, Larry, and I think there is no necessity for one," returned de Courcy.

"Thrue for you my lord, thrue as deaths an' berrins*!" exclaimed Larry. "And think o' the dear young lady, the good, kind, noble generous, and clare-headed young lady, to be impached of her rason by such a pair o' tithe-procters! Whoo! that acknowledged divil, Mac Walker—I'll go murther him! by the mother that brought me into the world, I will!" and he turned to rush out of the apartment.

"Stay, stay, Larry!" said his master in an authoritative voice, "this is my affair, and I, only, am the proper person to punish the principal: and *him* I shall, certainly, chastise to his heart's content. As for the wretched hireling, he is too far beneath resentment to provoke any one's wrath."

"Lave him to me, my lord, lave him to my

* Burials.

sinse of justice; and I'll promise your lordship, he'll niver trouble you in this brathing univarse agin!"

"No, no, Larry, I respect you too much to put you in opposition to such a mercenary rascal. But how did you gain possession of this letter?"

Larry related all the circumstances one after another, in strict order of time and place, admirably mimicking the antics of that "overfed porpish Mr. Ellshender Mac Walker."

CHAPTER II.

On the morning following the masquerade, long before the Duchess' usual hour for receiving guests, Mr. Talbot was admitted into her boudoir. Did he come to hear her sarcastic reproaches, on the ill success of his scheme of the preceding night? or, to concert new plans of iniquity? We are unable to inform our readers, for, just as the Duchess had, in a tone of the most bitter irony, congratulated him on the success of his excellently conducted plot, and, ere Talbot had time to reply, the door opened.

"How now," said the Duchess, "did I not command that no interruption?"

"Pardon, Eccellenza," said Paolo, "but the Earl de Courcy insisted on being announced, and wishes to speak with your Grace immediately."

"Earl de Courcy! you dream surely?"

"No Eccellenza, his lordship desired me to mention his arrival only to V. S."

Mr. Talbot looked the picture of consternation. "I will," he stammered, "withdraw, for the present; I will see your Grace some other opportunity; but," he added, in a cautious tone, "for heaven's sake, be careful!"

"Oh, do not fear that I shall betray my own secret," she replied, in a tone of contempt.

He was hastening from the room, in the hope of avoiding de Courcy, but before he could effect his purpose, the Earl entered, and, certainly, the stern cold salute he vouchsafed him, did not serve to reassure his alarmed feelings.

"My dear Ernest," exclaimed the Duchess,

as she held out her hand to greet her brother, "how surprised and delighted I am to see you! why, you really are an extraordinary creature; a perfect hero of romance;—now, surprising one with a sudden disappearance; now, with as unexpected a return; positively, there is no calculating upon you, for, the last time you wrote, you told me"—

"That I did not intend to return for some time; true, nor shall I remain here! But I trust my appearance is not as unwelcome as it is unlooked for."

"Unwelcome! for shame. But it is a very unwelcome circumstance to see you looking so ill; what have you been doing with yourself?"

Had the Duchess been de Courcy's enemy; she might, indeed, have contemplated with inward gratification, the fruits of her falsehood and fraud. He was sadly changed—thin, pale, and grief stricken; and, certainly, the Duchess beheld the change with unfeigned concern; for,

strange to say, she really loved him—loved him better than she loved any thing, except her own selfish ambition, and the gratification of her own bad passions. Her manner, therefore, which had, at first, been constrained, became more natural; and it was with the tone of real concern that she expressed her sorrow at his altered appearance.

"I have been trying to forget," he said, in a hollow voice, "but it cannot be." There was a short silence, then, with a severity of manner, unusual to him when speaking to his sister, he exclaimed, "Augusta, what can you have to do with that fellow, who has just left you?"

The Duchess was completely thrown off her guard, and exhibited signs of confusion very rare in her; she hesitated,—then, with an attempt at nonchalance, replied, "oh, he only called."

"He must be a favoured guest, to be admitted at this hour to my sister's boudoir. And yet," he continued, fixing a keen glance

on her, "his manners, conversation, and appearance, are not of the kind she is likely to admire."

"Admire!" replied the Duchess, who had now recovered herself; "no, you are quite right; but it is an obliging creature."

"No doubt, very obliging! ready to enter into every species of the basest villany;" and de Courcy stamped with violence on the ground.

The duchess turned pale with alarm.

"But *my* sister can have no need of his assistance;"—she breathed again, "she," he continued, "cannot require the aid of a villain, a liar, a deep scheming rascal!"

"My dear Ernest, you amaze me, I really thought the creature perfectly harmless; and, if you must know what I wanted with him, I suppose I must tell you. The fact is, I have taken a fancy to four beautiful little ponies belonging to somebody that Talbot happens to know, and as the person is desirous of parting with them, I commissioned him to get them for me."

"Give him no further commissions, then, of any kind! let your doors be shut against him; and let not his presence pollute the air you breathe. He is a viper, a wretch, a mercenary liar! Nay, interrupt me not, but listen—When I was last with you, you refused the confidence I was anxious to repose in you: you eluded my attempts to speak to you in private, you either did not desire to listen to me, or you had, always, something of more interest to attend to."

"Dear Ernest, this is unkind."

"Hear me, I pray, without comment: I have much to say. Well, you refused, or rather contrived to waive my purposed communication. Your motive for so doing, I have never sought to enquire—I trust it was a pure one."

The Duchess' cheeks again flushed, and she felt unable to encounter the steady enquiring eye of her brother.

"I was at that time," he continued, "the happiest of mortals! I loved, and was beloved by

one of the best and purest of her sex,—I do not speak of her beauty; it was the least of her attractions—I was engaged to Grace Shafton!" and he again looked keenly on his sister. "Your summons to town broke in upon my happiness, but I obeyed it, intending soon to return, and hasten my nuptials. You detained me upon various pretexts, and, in the meanwhile, I meet here this venemous animal, this reptile Talbot. To be brief, instigated by his avarice, and desire of possessing Grace himself, he forged and poured into my ear a devilish tale, so plausibly fabricated that it shook me with alarm. Yes, he tried to convince me that the lovely, the pureless Grace, had the seeds of insanity in her blood; that her mother died raving mad, and that, in fact, madness was hereditary in the family. Fool that I was to listen to his artfully forged tale! I was not, however, so blind as to believe him. I required proof, but, even here, he was ready for me. He referred me to some wretches, whom he had

bribed to act a part in his nefarious plot. The *woman*, schooled by her husband, a swindling quack, averred that she had nursed Mrs. Shafton in her last illness, and swore that she had died perfectly frantic; that Grace was born during the period of her mother's insanity, which broke out soon after marriage, and that, in fact, there could be no doubt of her inheriting the complaint.

"She succeeded so well in impressing this belief on my already heated fancy, that, mad with rage and grief, I posted down to Meadlands. I saw Grace, but, deluded by this villanous tale, I saw her with jaundiced eyes; and, instead of feeling convinced of the falsehood by her calm and soothing manners, fancied that I already beheld the signs of madness in her lovely countenance. She prayed me to see her father, —but, with false promises on my tongue, I left her; hurried home, and after writing a bitter letter to Dr. Shafton, again departed.

"I left England instantly,"—de Courcy paused, overcome by agitation and exhaustion,

and, for a brief space, seemed incapable of further exertion. The Duchess did not interrupt him, she was at a loss what to say; and, also, felt anxious to learn what was to follow. He soon continued—

"I went to Paris—thence, to Rome. On my return to the former city, I found, amongst several letters awaiting me, one from Dr. Shafton. He had followed me to London while I was flying from happiness, and, hearing of my departure, consigned a letter to the care of my agent, who, thinking from his manner that it could be of no consequence, delayed forwarding it until an opportunity occurred.

The letter was in every respect, worthy of him—honest, noble and dignified. He told me that his reason for writing was to vindicate his character from an unjust charge—one without the slightest foundation in truth. 'Mrs. Shafton', he wrote, 'died of consumption, occasioned by sudden cold, her mind being, if anything, more collected and sedate on her bed of death, than

it had been in healthful life—Never, at any time, had it evinced symptoms of insanity. Dr. Newton had attended her from her marriage to her last illness; Mrs. Miles Stanhope, of Hertford Street, closed her eyes; and the nurse, who was employed at her accouchment, is still living, and, in conjunction with those already named, can attest the facts. So much,' he continued, 'for the false charge, which, I will believe, has been imposed upon you! and I leave it entirely to your lordship's pleasure whether to satisfy yourself of the truth of my statement or not. But, I should be loth to trust the happiness of my child to one, who could act with so little regard to her feelings. Had you loved her as she deserves to be loved, you would have enquired the truth or falsehood of such a report from the lips of one, whose veracity, permit me to say, you have never had reason to doubt.'

De Courcy again paused, he seemed to await some sympathy on the part of his sister—she was still silent.

"What do you suppose were my feelings on perusing this letter?" he enquired.

"Why, I dare say, my dear Ernest, you were anxious to ascertain the truth of Dr. Shafton's assertions."

De Courcy gave her a bitter look. "No," he replied, "I was not! It at once carried conviction to my heart—I was not anxious to ascertain the truth of that which came from the lips of truth! but, I was determined," and his voice trembled with passion, "to seek out the author of my misery; to wreak my vengeance on those accursed instruments of his villany! Now, that is my first and only care!" and, clenching his hand violently, he strode up and down the apartment.

The Duchess was really alarmed at his violence. "Pray be composed, my dear Ernest." she said. "Remember, you are acting with just the same precipitation that occasioned all this misery. And, after all, who knows that Dr. Shafton has spoken truth?"

"I know it!" he replied, turning fiercely round upon her: "Did I not tell you I had detected the whole plot—got the confession of that low villain, Mac Walker—traced Talbot as the head of it?"

The Duchess turned pale; but she soon perceived that *she* was still unsuspected, "And I suppose, my dear Ernest that, after Dr. Shafton's very rude letter, you do not intend to have any thing more to do with him?"

"Rude letter!" echoed de Courcy, his lip curling with contempt.—"I should, long ere this, have thrown myself at Grace's feet; have implored her forgiveness, have explained to Dr. Shafton the frightful deceit that was practised upon me——but it is too late!" and he looked down dejectedly.

"Why so?" asked the Duchess eagerly.

"Even before I left Paris, I learned from d'Arcy, who had just arrived from London, that Miss Shafton had spent the season in London; that she was the reigning belle, and

that she was already engaged either to lord Charles Fitzrook, or to Falkland."

The Duchess' lips turned of an ashy paleness, "You do not mean to say she is engaged to"—

"To Falkland! yes, it is beyond a doubt; he is ever at her side; her constant and permitted attendant. Last night, at the masquerade, she was under his sole protection; and"—

"You at the masquerade my dear Ernest!"

"I have been every where, where, unseen, there was a possibility of seeing her."

"You must forgive me for saying, my dear Ernest, that I think Miss Shafton cannot be worthy of your sighs. What! in so short a time allow another engagement? You must confess there is great indelicacy, great want of feeling."

"She is right," replied de Courcy in a hurried tone, "quite right to forget one who treated her so cruelly."

"Very *wise*," observed the Duchess with a sneer, "but not very loving. You were deceived

my dear Ernest: she certainly did not *love* you: was, most likely, attracted by your title and wealth."

"No, by Heaven, you wrong her!" exclaimed de Courcy vehemently, "title has no charms in the eyes of Grace Shafton; and for wealth, she has more than sufficient."

The Duchess made no reply, but her looks told her incredulity, "at any rate, my dear de Courcy, you must try and follow the lady's example, forget her, and find another love."

"You know not what you say, Augusta; you know not the temperament of my love! I shall never forget her! her angelic sweetness, her calm dignity, her innocence, her truth, her loveliness—No, I can never love again!"

The Duchess made a gesture of impatience. "Oh, when she is Mrs. Falkland, you will, I hope, think differently."

De Courcy started, as if stung by some venomous reptile; he darted a reproachful glance at his sister, then, controlling himself, replied "Falkland is a worthy fellow."

"Falkland, after de Courcy"—and the Duchess gave a shrug—a most expressive one. Perhaps de Courcy *thought* that Grace had been precipitate; 'yes, she had been in haste to forget him; but, when he remembered his own strange conduct, though he could not forgive, he could, in some measure, excuse. In fact, he felt he had lost her through his own folly, and *that* embittered the loss.

"Farewell, Augusta!" said de Courcy, rising suddenly, "I have still something to do."

"Where are you going, Ernest?"

"To chastise a villain!"

"You will not, surely, endanger your own life in encountering such a wretch—you will not put him on equal terms with yourself?"

"Leave that to me! I rest not till I am revenged!"

"You will return?"

"I do not wish any one to know that I am in Town, and you will have some one— no, I will say farewell!"

"I will have no one! and the Duke is out of town for some days; nay, you must and shall return!"

De Courcy smiled faintly; "Well," he said "I will, if possible, be with you at dinner; provided that we be alone."

"We *will* be quite alone!"

He had no sooner left the room, than the Duchess seized a pen, wrote a few lines, and summoned Paolo.

"This instantly to Mr. Talbot: fly, you must be quick as thought, and be careful you are not seen by lord de Courcy."

Paolo made his obeisance, and vanished.

The Duchess' reflections, when left to herself, were neither pleasing nor satisfactory. She began to suspect that the part she had acted, had neither been a very wise nor a very safe one. There was a something in her brother's manner towards her, that puzzled and alarmed her—she almost feared that he suspected her. The idea was inexpressibly painful.

"It is but suspicion," she said, "but even that, I cannot bear. I must do all in my power to efface the impression; I will not—I cannot—lose him."

Did the Duchess regret that she had practised a fraud upon him? did she mourn for his lost happiness? Alas no! she regretted that her scheme had been discovered, but rejoiced that her endeavours to prevent his marriage with Grace, had not been frustrated.

At first, she had looked upon Grace as only the obstacle to the fulfilment of a favourite scheme. But when she beheld her in London; marked her excessive loveliness; heard the man that *she* loved pronounce encomiums on her beauty; saw him pay her his homage (that homage hitherto her own); she began to hate. In proportion to the admiration Grace excited; in proportion to the devotion shown by lord Charles; this hatred encreased, it became deep, deadly. As she listened to de Courcy's tale, she trembled lest she should hear that his

ngagement with this hated being had been renewed; and, when he told the downfal of his hopes, her delight was almost too great for concealment. Were it true—were it true, that Grace was engaged to Falkland, then would lord Charles, also, be disappointed; he would know the bitter pangs of jealousy. Then, he would return to her—he would sue her for forgiveness, but, he should sue in vain—she would spurn him. To see him again at her feet, and to spurn him from her with contempt, would be a bliss worth knowing. Yes, she would, henceforth, live for ambition and revenge.

The Duchess had borne, with *apparent* indifference, the neglect, if not desertion, of her lover. She had affected to perceive no alteration in his manner towards herself. In secret, she nourished her vengeful and angry feelings; she awaited her opportunity—woe to lord Charles, when she should, at last, find it!

CHAPTER III.

When Grace reached her own apartment, after returning from the masquerade, she in vain endeavoured to compose her mind to rest; the excited state of her nerves rendered sleep impossible. The noise of the music still sounded in her ears, the glare of the lights still oppressed her eyes, and the motley assemblage still danced before them. One figure stood conspicuous:—was it that of the astrologer, whose rude attempts to detain her, had caused her so much alarm? He, it is true, had performed a prominent part in the events of the

evening, and was not likely to be forgotten; but, it was not he who had caused the heart of Grace to beat with wild emotion, and then sicken with disappointment! it was not his voice that had sent such thrilling tones to her heart, awakening the remembrance of past joys. Oh, no! there was another actor in that scene—he, who came to her rescue—the melancholy Hamlet. His person, his manners, but, above all, his voice betrayed him—she could not be deceived—it was de Courcy.

There is much in a voice; much more than people imagine. It is expressive of the disposition,—we would almost say—the mind. Did you ever hear a rough grating voice, that was not accompanied with a corresponding harshness of feeling? or a monotonous and untunable one, that was not symptomatic of a dull and obtuse intellect? Even when nature has been unkind in quality of the tone, gentleness of disposition, and cultivation of intellect, soften its defects, and it gradually becomes modu-

lated to the feelings of the owner. Coarseness of voice, both in man and woman, denotes coarseness of nature; for, were the perceptions delicate, the possessor would soon become aware of the defect, and labour to remedy it.

But, to return, de Courcy's voice was peculiarly fine its tones rich, full, and melodious, went at once to the heart, and were not easily forgotten. What wonder then, that Grace felt she could not be mistaken in it? He had watched her all the evening, he had been prompt to protect her from insult, but, he had also been cold and reserved, he had avoided the thanks of her father and herself. It was plain that he did not wish to be recognised. Her cheek burned, and her temples throbbed; in vain she turned upon her pillow,—in vain she courted slumber; the broad daylight, which soon streamed through the closed curtains, precluded even the hope of rest.

When Jessy came to attend her young mistress in the morning, she found her suffering

with violent headache, and persuaded her to allow her to fetch her some tea. Grace, who really felt unable to raise her head, assented.

"Won't you try and eat something, Miss Grace?" asked Jessy, as she stood by her lady's bed side. "Well a day, this London is, to be sure, a fine, grand, noisy place; and great sights there are to be seen in it; and, no doubt, the parties are very wonderful and very pleasant, but, after all, I'd rather be in our own dear Meadlands!"

"I am something of your opinion, Jessy; but, I dare say, we shall not stay very long."

"I am truly glad to hear it Miss Grace; though they do say in the housekeeper's room—only, may be you'll think it a liberty in me to mention it?"—

"What do they say Jessy?"

"Why, they say, Miss, that you will not go back to Meadlands; for, that you are a going to be married."

"Married, girl," cried Grace, "what nonsense is this."

"Yes, Miss Grace, I said it was all nonsense! so I hope you will not be angry with me; but I said I didn't think it was very likely that Mr. Jones the butler, and Mrs. Smith, and all the people, knew better than *me*, who have attended solely on you, Miss Grace, for the last five years."

"This is very absurd, Jessy; I really do not understand it."

"Why they say, Miss, that you are to be married, almost directly, to the tall, elegant, sprightly gentleman, that, to be sure, is always here, Mr. Falkland, Miss: but I told them I thought they'd all find themselves mistaken. I was sure, Miss Grace," continued Jessy, significantly, "that I know'd better than that."

"You were certainly right, in contradicting it. I am *not* going to be married to Mr. Falkland, nor to any one else!" said Grace very gravely.

"La, Miss, who *do* you think I saw yesterday, when I just stepped out for the flowers you wanted?"

"I do not know, indeed, Jessy."

"Why lord de Courcy, Miss; and I was to be sure, so astonished, because they said he was gone abroad for a great while, and, at first, I thought it could not be *him;* for, indeed, he is not looking like the same at all, so very thin and pale; and to make sure, I followed him a little way, and then he went into a shop; not before I had a full view of his handsome face; but he did not see me, though I was waiting to drop him a curtsey. And I wonder, Miss Grace, that Larry, who is always with his lordship, should never have come to say how d'ye do, to an old friend like me, seeing he *must* know where I am."

Grace would, willingly, have allowed Jessy full latitude to continue her speech, but she here made a full stop. With as much composure as she could command, she said

"I hope, Jessy, you do not let your tongue run on in this way, among the servants; I should be both hurt and displeased if I thought

you made my affairs a subject of conversation. I expect something better from one who has been brought up, I may almost say educated, in my father's house.

"And I'm sorry, Miss Grace," replied Jessy, the tears in her eyes, "that you should have such a bad opinion of me, and think me so ungrateful! I'm sure I've never said a word that I thought would displease you; and as for talking, I've never mentioned lord de Courcy's name since I've been in this house, and I never even told any one that I met him."

"I am glad to hear it, Jessy! I have the best opinion of you, which you will, I am sure retain by pursuing the same careful and proper behaviour."

"Indeed I will, Miss Grace; but won't you try and take a morsel of something?"

"Not now, Jessy, I feel inclined to sleep, so you may leave me."

Dr. Shafton, upon finding that Grace was too ill to descend to the breakfast-room, hastened

to visit her. He found her indeed so far from well, that he insisted upon her remaining in bed, ordered some composing medicine, and begged of Mrs. Stanhope, neither to ask her any questions nor to allow her to talk.

Both Falkland and lord Charles were disappointed in their hopes of seeing Grace. The latter had a long conversation on the events of the preceding night, with Mrs. Stanhope. She told him of the mistake that Talbot had made, in addressing her for the Duchess de' Rinucci, and of the imfamous plot arranged between them; "and now," she asked, "can you tell me the occasion of so much malice?"

"It might not have been the Duchess de' Rinucci! You know, there was the Duchess of——"

"It *must* have been she, because she was of your sister's party!"

Lord Charles felt that it must out; though he determined to prevent it if possible.

"It is," he replied, "indeed unaccountable!

but for the rascal Talbot, leave him to me; depend upon it he shall annoy Miss Shafton no longer. I shall pay him a visit, and convince him of the necessity of decamping, and will, if possible, sift the matter still further."

"I shall feel obliged to you; we must punish the wretch, and also put a stop to the annoyance: but it would be disagreeable to have the affair made public."

"You must not think of such a thing; though the rascal richly deserves it. But, never fear, I shall give him that he will not in a hurry forget. Farewell, I shall call to-morrow in the hope to see Miss Shafton."

"Yes," said Mrs. Stanhope, as he shut the door, "he will come, and Falkland will come; and, notwithstanding my determination that Grace should have a title, I fear my wishes are on Falkland's side. He is the superior character; and, I think, stands the best chance: —the *best*, and that is not saying much; for Grace is unaccountably indifferent. I do not

think she loves him, and yet he is, in every way, attractive.

"I am quite well this morning, dear papa!" said Grace, as the doctor entered her room the next morning.

"Better, my dear child, certainly!" replied he, as he took his seat beside her; "and so, I suppose we shall have our curiosity satisfied? Mrs. Stanhope is dying to know what happened to you, after your separation from Falkland."

"Indeed, dear Sir, I tremble to think of it?" She then entered into the particulars of the scene, and concluded by observing. "What his intentions were I know not. Had it not been for the——stranger."

"Very odd that the latter did not wait to receive our thanks; but we shall, I hope, find him out."

"I hope, dear papa, you will not remain much longer in town; that is, unless you yourself prefer it; for, believe me, dear Sir, it does not have the effect that, I know, your kindness

intended. I am sure I should feel better in our own green woods again."

"Until this unfortunate masquerade," replied the doctor, "I thought you decidedly improved, both in health and spirits. If it be only the alarm and fatigue of that evening, which have given you this desire, it will pass off, and you will, in a day or two, forget it; if you have any other reason tell me so; you know I only study your happiness."

"My dear, dear father!" and Grace took his hand affectionately; "how can I ever repay half that I owe you?"

The doctor pressed her to his heart. "I trust, my beloved child," he said, "to be amply repaid by seeing you cheerful and happy: God knows I have no other desire!— so then, I think we must not hurt my old friend by retreating in the height of the season; she has been all kindness, and seems to feel for you as for a daughter."

"She does indeed," replied Grace, "and I

am truly grateful—but—"

"But what Grace?"

"I do not feel equal," and her lip quivered as she spoke, "to meet *him*—de Courcy."

"To meet de Courcy," and the doctor looked on her as if he feared her brain was wandering.

"It is a great weakness," she continued, "I own it—but yet I shrink from the trial!"

"But, there is no probability of your meeting him."

"Yes, dear Sir, it was he who protected me at the masquerade from the rudeness of the astrologer."

"De Courcy! did he then make himself known to you?"

"No, it needed not, I knew him instantly—and then the voice—the manner"—

"Impossible! your imagination has deceived you: he is not in England."

"He is in England. Had I had any doubt, it is at an end; for Jessy assures me, that

she saw him in the streets, on the morning of the masquerade."

"Extraordinary!"—the doctor paused long, and seemed deep in thought; he arose, paced the room, then, returning to Grace, he said calmly.

"I am sorry, my dearest Grace, that you do not feel equal to meet him; for he has treated you very ill. He must, long since, have been convinced of the falsehood of the report, which, I now fear, was only a pretence to get rid of an engagement he regretted. I have been greatly deceived in him. Believe me, he is not worthy your thoughts; he has not even condescended to answer the letter of explanation I wrote him. I could have wished you to meet him, and with indifference; but, if that cannot be—if you feel unequal to the task—I will make the best excuse I can to our kind hostess."

"No, my father, no!" cried Grace, starting up with energy, "you are quite right: I will

throw off this weakness: I will *not* fly, as if I feared to meet him—he shall never know the pain he has caused! Let us remain—you have aroused me to what I owe to myself—to what I owe to you."

The doctor pressed her hand, "I must not" he said, "have you make any exertion, to which you feel yourself unequal; you are not, at present, quite fit for gaiety, and I shall order you a few quiet days. In the mean time, we shall see—we shall ascertain if he be really likely to remain in town."

When Grace descended to the drawing room, where she expected to find Mrs. Stanhope, she was eagerly greeted by Falkland. He was the last person she wished to see alone; for, his manner at the masquerade would have sufficed, without the addition of Jessy's information, to convince her that his attentions were pointed. But, it was too late to retreat; he was already at her side, tenderly enquiring after her health, and accusing his own blindness and stupidity,

for having caused her alarm. "I shall not be happy," he concluded, "until I hear my forgiveness from your own lips."

"I have nothing to forgive;" replied Grace, "but, if I had, there is one certain way of obtaining it; and that is, by never mentioning that odious evening to me again. I shall always dislike the very name of a masquerade!"

"I am dumb!" replied Mr. Falkland, a little surprised at her vivacity of manner.

Grace felt that she had spoken impatiently, and said. "I make but a poor figure in a London life; I detest its crowded parties; its display it is too artificial, too ceremonious, too"—

"Heartless," interrupted Falkland "and too frivolous. I am not surprised at the judgment you have formed."

"And yet, I ought not to pass so entire a condemnation, for there are many, living within its influence, who are, certainly, neither heartless nor frivolous. There is our dear Mrs. Stanhope, for instance, and"—

"And who else?" asked Falkland, "now I have, positively, a great curiosity to know who else has the honour of coming within your exception?"

"And why not Mr. Falkland?" replied Grace, smiling; for I am sure he is worthy to do so."

Falkland felt gratified at the implied approbation of his character; but, as a lover, the easy frankness of her manner did not satisfy him. He knew that *love* is timid in expressing itself; and he never felt the truth of this more than at the present moment. He had come with the determination of learning his fate; but, now, that he was about to have it decided, he trembled at its uncertainty. Grace Shafton was, he felt, too great a treasure to be easily won; and, not being much of a coxcomb, he did not feel at all sure of success.

As these thoughts and feelings, in much less time than we have taken to describe them, rushed through his mind, he gazed on Grace with a look of melancholy, yet intense, admiration,

that brought the bright colour into her cheeks. Feeling a liitle embarrassed, she said smiling.

"I see that you are not at all grateful for my approbation. I shall, instantly, recall it."

"Most grateful!" replied Falkland, taking her hand, "most delighted! but I am too deeply interested, in hearing Miss Shafton's opinion of me, to hear it with composure; for," he continued, with a serious earnestness that much affected Grace, "my whole happiness depends upon that opinion."

Grace felt some confusion at the unexpected turn the conversation had taken; she hesitated —then, seeing that he paused for a reply—she said.

"I can truly say, that Mr. Falkland's character has won my entire esteem; though I will not be vain enough to imagine that that knowledge can contribute much to his happiness."

"Much," he replied, "much! and, dared I hope that the esteem, you so kindly own, might

ripen into a warmer feeling, I should, indeed, be blessed. Say, dear Miss Shafton, that, when you have known me longer, I may hope for a return of the deep devoted love with which you have inspired me?"

"That," replied Grace, kindly yet firmly, "I cannot—dare not say! I will never bid you hope that which cannot be; my sentiments will never change."

Falkland looked down, with an expression of countenance so truly wretched, that Grace felt deeply grieved.

"I have been precipitate," said he, "I could not expect, on so short an acquaintance"—

"Believe me," interrupted Grace, "believe me, Mr. Falkland, I feel for you a friendship that years can scarcely encrease; but, I will not deceive you, it is but friendship."

There was a pause of some minutes. Falkland appeared deeply thoughtful. At last, he looked up, and holding out his hand to Grace, he said, with a melancholy smile.

"Then, friendship let it be! We are *friends*, then, Miss Shafton?"

"I hope so," replied Grace, as she gave him hers in return.

Falkland pressed it to his lips; he, then, turned hastily away, walked to the window, and stood, for some moments, in deep and sad reflection; then, suddenly mastering his emotion, he returned to Grace, and said—

"Believe me, my dear Miss Shafton, I do, and ever shall, consider it a high privilege to be really your friend; it is a title I know you would not bestow idly; for, what is there more sacred than *true* friendship? Forget, then, what has passed to day, and rank me as one ever ready, not only to claim, but to fulfil its high obligations. Farewell, for to day! to morrow, I shall be more calm. God bless you!"—and he left the room.

Grace was really affected; she deeply deplored being the cause of pain to one she so highly esteemed; and, fearing that other vi-

sitors might arrive during Mrs. Stanhope's absence, she retired to her own chamber.

Many of our readers will, no doubt, be surprised at the apparent calmness of the rejected lover. He ought, instantly, to have started off for the continent: he ought to have left the apartment in utter despair. The idea of sinking into mere friendship, after having entertained the hopes of a lover, is, certainly, both unusual and unnatural.

But Falkland was a shrewd observer; he loved Grace deeply and sincerely, and felt that his happiness was involved in the success of his suit. She had, it is true, been most decided in her rejection of him; but he had observed her keenly, and felt sure that there was no favoured rival. Lord Charles was, by far, the most formidable competitor; and, for him, he felt convinced, that she had no preference. If then, her heart were disengaged, (and upon venturing a hint on the subject to Mrs. Stanhope, that lady had assured him that she felt no doubt as

to that important fact) why might he not hope, with time and assiduity, to inspire her with a warmer sentiment? "She owns that she esteems me highly," he argued; "and the heart of woman, when unoccupied, seldom remains satisfied with so cold a sentiment."

Falkland, therefore, determined upon perseverance. He thought Grace of too delicate a mind to love hastily; but, he, also, felt sure she was of too tender and affectionate a nature to remain untouched by the most tender of all passions. "When she *does* love," he reasoned, "it will be with deep devotion: and thrice happy he, who may become the object of it! Yes, I have much to fear; but I will not despair—when I see one more favoured than myself, then then, indeed (but not till then) will I say, farewell, Grace, farewell for ever."

Thus, as he paced homewards, Falkland soliloquized. How prone is human nature to flatter its hopes and desires with delusion!

And yet, Falkland had reasoned logically; he showed a profound knowledge of the heart of woman; but he set out on a false basis—viz., the supposition that Grace's heart was disengaged. Here he erred, in judging that, because she had been brought up in the retirement of the country, her heart must, necessarily, be free—her affections at her own disposal. Mrs. Stanhope (a sensible woman) had come to the same conclusion. As if Love waited for a young lady's introduction into the world: or, as if groves, and streams, and flowers, were not a much better element for him, than balls, masquerades, and theatres.

CHAPTER IV.

When de Courcy left his sister's house, he drove to the club to which Talbot belonged—it was his intention to have chastised him publicly. He was not there however. Learning that he lodged in Sackville Street, he, instantly, proceeded thither.

On his way, he could not help reflecting on the action he meditated. He was a christian, and, as such, knew duelling to be an offence against the commands of God, who has expressly declared "Vengeance is mine, I will repay!" He tried to stifle the voice of con-

science; he called to mind the irreparable injury he had sustained from the machination of the villain, and ended by working his passions into the desired violence.

He soon arrived at the house where Talbot resided, but, before we introduce him, we will take a peep at that gentleman's feelings.

Upon leaving the Duchess, his thoughts naturally turned to the cold and haughty bow by which, alone, the Earl had deigned to notice him. "But," he inwardly exclaimed, "he was always a d—d proud puppy; and, if I had had no views of my own, I should have been delighted to baulk his supercilious lordship. I certainly never found him so very cold and very haughty as this morning, though:—he cannot have heard any thing—that rascal Mac Walker is always threatening to betray me, if I do not supply his exorbitant demands; but I have not heard of the fellow lately, and he would not be such a fool as to betray himself."

He returned home, determining to wait for

the Duchess' summons; for summons him he felt certain she would. And he had not been very long engaged in writing some letters, before the expected billet was put into his hand; but what was his astonishment and consternation, upon reading the following lines.

"There is no time to be lost, you must instantly get out of the way! de Courcy has discovered all, and swears vengeance against you. Fly—you may, always, apply to me, should you need assistance!"

"Fly," he exclaimed, "yes, egad, that I must, and pretty quick too—that villain Mac Walker"—as he spoke, another letter was brought him; it was from Mac Walker himself. It hastily informed him, that a letter intended for him (Talbot), had fallen into the Earl's hands; that *he* had, already, decamped, and advised him to do the same.

"There is indeed no time to be lost," thought Talbot, "for, though I'm a tolerable shot when cool, my nerves, I know, would not bear the test

of twelve paces, with de Courcy opposed to me. Yes, I must make instant arrangements, and, in the meanwhile, must be out—" and he was reaching his hand towards the bell, when a knock at the door startled him. Taking the alarm, he rang—listened—" d--n the fellow; surely he will answer my bell first? but, no, the rascal is going to the door!" and he rushed out in order to prevent him; but it was too late, and he had scarcely time to re-enter and shut the door, when de Courcy, advancing sternly into the middle of the room, appeared before him.

Talbot's lip became livid, and his voice faltered, as, with a dreadful attempt at a smile, he greeted his visitor—

"This is an unexpected pleasure, my lord; I am delighted to have the honour; pray, be seated."

"No, Sir, I take no seat in the apartment of a liar and a villain!"

"My lord! this is really strange language;

very intemperate language, my lord! but I am willing to believe that there is some mistake—your lordship is excited—there is some misunderstanding."

"None Sir, none whatever! have the goodness to read that," and he flung Mac Walker's letter on the table.

Talbot took up the letter, and wasted some time in perusing it; or, rather, in considering what was to be done. Laying it down, he at length said.

"A great rascal, this Mac Walker, a very great rascal!—but I trust your lordship has too much penetration not to see through this. An evident fraud, got up to get money from me!"

"Cowardly villain! miserable liar! follow me instantly, and give me the satisfaction of a gentleman; or I will proclaim you for coward and liar, to the whole world."

Talbot paused for a moment; his determination was taken. "Well, my lord, I shall be

ready to give you the satisfaction you require, if, after what you shall hear, you still desire it."

"Proceed Sir."

"Since you will have it, my lord, I regret to inform you that it was at the request of your sister—the Duchess de' Rinucci—that I undertook to deceive you. She entreated me, she persuaded me to assist her in preventing you from uniting yourself to a person of no family. She had other views for you. She used every art to induce me; and, I regret to say, I was weak enough to yield to her prayers."

De Courcy was stunned. There was a long pause—"Give me proof of this," he said, in a hoarse tone.

Talbot handed him the note, he had just received from the Duchess.

De Courcy gazed upon it—it was but too evident—his heart swelled to bursting. She, his dear, his beloved sister—Oh God! the thought was agony. But there was no doubting it, and the last hideous line showed that

she had hired a wretch on purpose to deceive him.

Talbot allowed him time to feel all the exquisite pain of conviction, then, in his calm hypocritical voice, he said.

"If lord de Courcy still wishes to have the satisfaction he has demanded, I am now ready to attend him; that is, when proper preliminaries are settled—but—for the sake of both the ladies, I should advise that the affair remain private."

De Courcy eyed him with a look of chilling contempt. "Take your paltry life," he said, "for it is that you aim at; take it! The mean and wretched agent of another's guilt, is unworthy my vengeance! but, beware, beware how you appear in my presence."

"Nay, my lord, for that matter," replied Talbot, "I suppose I should have as good a chance for my life as your lordship; but, I should, certainly, desire my second to make the whole affair public."

"Dastardly wretch!" cried de Courcy, with a look and tone that made Talbot recoil, "if you ever dare to breathe a word that shall implicate the Duchess de' Rinucci, I will inflict on you a public and shameful punishment; I will pursue you to the end of the world, and publish your infamy in its four corners—and, if I spare you now, it is only to shield from public shame, the character of one, who, however unworthy, has still borne the name of a de Courcy."

"Nay, my lord, I shall keep my secret if you keep your's." muttered Talbot, afraid again to arouse the wrath of the lion. But his heart was overflowing with rage and malice, and he swore in that heart, that, if possible, he would be revenged for the insults that had been heaped upon him.

"Tis well!" returned the Earl, as he quitted the apartment.

De Courcy departed, a prey to the most bitter anguish. He seemed to be the mark for

fate to shoot her poisoned arrows at: and the last had gone right to the heart. His sister, his own beloved sister—she whom he had loved; in whom he had felt such pride! The reflection was indeed galling. He had not been blind to her faults, but he attributed them to a pride that would, at least, preserve her from falsehood, guilt, or meanness. To find that that sister had descended to take into confidence a wretch like Talbot, to plan a fraud, to invent lies—and all for what?—to ruin the peace and happiness of her own brother! It was perfect agony!

He immediately returned to the hotel, to which, in order to keep a strict incognito, he had gone on his arrival in town. His first occupation was to write to Grace; then, to Dr. Shafton a letter descriptive of his bitter feelings; deeply regretting his conduct, and detailing to him the whole of the fraud practised upon him. He expressed his mortification and regret, at finding Grace engaged to another,

"and though," he said, "I have my own folly and credulity, alone to thank for the loss of my happiness, the reflection does not enable me to bear it more firmly." He concluded with wishes and prayers for their happiness; and, having sealed and directed the letters, rang to order Larry. Larry, unfortunately, was out; and François made his appearance. Handing him the letters, he desired him to take them to Hertford Street, and, if possible, to give them into Dr. Shafton's or Miss Shafton's hand.

When François departed on his errand, lord de Courcy employed the time in writing to his sister; after which, throwing himself on a sofa, he gave full vent to his miserable reflections. When he thought sufficient time had elapsed, he again rang the bell, and François attended.

"Did you see Dr. Shafton?"

"No, my lord."

"Nor Miss Shafton?"

"Neither of them, my lord; but I left the letters."

"Right!" answered de Courcy, and again resigned himself to his sad thoughts.

The Duchess, having lounged away the morning in those vanities, which, though they cease to entertain, become necessary in order to pass away the time, returned home to play the kind and affectionate sister. The dinner hour arrived, but de Courcy came not; and, after waiting some time, the Duchess sat down to partake of a solitary repast. At this moment, a note was brought her: she opened it, and read the following words.

"Augusta, the villain, with whom you planned my misery, has ended by betraying you! Yes, I know all, and would not wish you more poignant agony than that I now endure. Where can I turn for consolation, now that you have rendered life odious to me, by severing the only tie that bound me to it? I have no longer a sister! Farewell Augusta, we can never meet more; but, remember, you are still a de Courcy,

and beware how you bring dishonour upon that name."

So long did this victim of her own deceits, sit gazing upon the open note, that Paolo, at last ventured to remind her, that the servant waited to remove the covers. With a sudden effort, she aroused herself, and, like an automaton, went through the ceremony of the repast; then, retiring to her boudoir, threw herself upon a sofa, for the first time in her life, a prey to actual anguish.

CHAPTER V.

"WHAT have you done with Falkland, Grace; he promised he would stay to dinner?" asked Mrs. Stanhope on her return.

"Perhaps he recollected some previous engagement?" replied Grace, avoiding the fib direct. "He will come to-morrow."

"Oh, ho, "thought Mrs. Stanhope, observing, without appearing to do so, Grace's blushing cheek—"he has proposed—I thought he would! Strange enough, though, his going away—yet, if she had not accepted him, he would not be coming to-morrow."

The good lady was puzzled: she fidgetted; she expected Grace would tell her; but day after day passed, and she knew no more. Falkland still came, but his visits were neither so long nor so frequent as they had been. She felt angry, without being able, precisely, to fix upon the person who deserved her ire. At last she was saved further anxiety upon the subject, by a long and satisfactory interview with Falkland.

He reposed his entire confidence in her; told her of his rejection; of his hopes, and of his fears. Mrs. Stanhope was charmed by the delicacy and warmth of his love; she, again, expressed her firm belief that Grace had no other attachment; promised him her assistance in aiding his plan, and gave him her best wishes for his success.

In the mean time, weeks were added to days, and the fear of meeting de Courcy had almost given place to the hope of so doing; but they saw him no where, heard of him no where, and

the doctor and even Grace herself, would have believed that she had been deceived by her own imagination and some similarity of voice and manner, had it not been for Jessy's positive assertion of having seen him. This, Jessy always qualified with her surprise at the unkindness and ill breeding of Larry, who had never once been to ask his old acquaintance how she did.

The subject was too often uppermost in Grace's thoughts; and she could not help reflecting that if it were he who had so unaccountably appeared to protect her at the masquerade—and the remembrance of the voice and figure always carried conviction with it—one thing was certain,—*he* wished not to renew the acquaintance. He, evidently, desired to remain unknown, and had, again, left London, probably, in order to avoid her. The thought was bitter; but it called up a powerful auxiliary, pride—which enabled her to struggle against it.

"Be it so!" she exclaimed, "we are, now,

nothing to each other! Oh, that I could forget that it once was otherwise! Why will memory recall those scenes of joy and peace, when he appeared all that was, great, good, and noble?"

The season was now drawing near its close, and Grace looked forward with real pleasure to a return to Meadlands. Lord Charles had not relaxed in his attentions, but Grace, who had no idea of coquetry, and who would have thought herself contemptible in practising it, received his devotion with a coldness that checked his further advances. She could not imagine the gratification of winning hearts, merely to have the liberty of trampling upon them. She received him, therefore, with politeness—never with warmth; and he had penetration enough to perceive, that, in proposing, he would only subject himself to a refusal: he did not however despair. He saw that Falkland was received only on the footing of a friend, and, therefore, determined to wait the event of

another season. "I shall, then," he said, "be privileged as an old friend, and may lay close siege."

"Indeed, I will take no excuse, dear Madam!" said Grace playfully, putting her arm round Mrs. Stanhope's neck, "you positively shall return into the country with us! must it not be so papa?"

"Certainly," replied the doctor, "or we shall never take up our quarters here again!"

"But, do I not tell you," cried Mrs Stanhope, "that I shall be delighted to spend a few months with you? let me, first," and she held forth a letter she had that morning received, "attend to the call of friendship, and, then, I am at your service."

"And how long will this visit take you, dear Madam?"

"Alas! my dear Grace, from what I hear, I fear that my friend has but a brief space to remain in this world. Her daughter, a sweet young girl, now unfortunately about to become an

orphan, writes me word that her mother is so much worse, that she claims my promise of seeing her ere she die. She has been long ill, and, I have reason to think, is not overburdened with friends."

"Then, indeed, I can have nothing to urge," replied Grace. "But, this poor young girl; what will become of her, if her Mother die?"

"What indeed, Grace!" said Mrs. Stanhope.

"If you think," remarked the doctor, "that my skill or experience will be of the least service, I will willingly accompany you."

"Thank you, my kind friend; but I believe all that human skill can devise, has, already, been tried. Her complaint is one that must, eventually, end in death. I doubt not she is sensible of its approach; and, therefore, desires to see me, that she may receive the last consolations of friendship, and consign to my care the desolate orphan, whom she leaves—not, I fear, too wealthy."

"Dear Madam," said Grace eagerly, "if indeed this melancholy event take place, and this poor girl be left, bring her, I entreat, with you; we will do all in our power to console her."

"Right, my dear girl," cried the doctor, "I am delighted that you forestalled my request."

"I will not hesitate," answered Mrs. Stanhope, "to avail myself of your kind offer; and, if it be as I suspect, you shall assist me in the best privilege that wealth can bestow—that of succouring the unfortunate."

It was a lovely day in the beginning of August, when the doctor and his beloved child drew near Meadlands. The trees were in their fullest dress. The corn fields, ripe for the golden harvest, gave a richness to the landscape, and bespoke peace and plenty. The day was drawing to its close, and the glowing beams of the setting sun brightened every object.

As they passed through the village, signs of joy and welcome greeted them on every side: blessings and prayers poured forth from the

smiling groups at every door, as the well known carriage appeared. The old hobbled to the threshold to lift up their hands and bless; the young to curtsey, and to smile the smile of welcome. Grace and her father felt that this was a joy far above every other.

Tears stood in the eyes of Grace; the doctor, also, was moved.

"My dearest father," she said, taking his hand; "to you I owe this happiness."

The doctor affectionately pressed her hand, as he replied; "I thank God that the seed was sown in good ground; you, my dear Grace, felt as much pleasure in acting upon my precepts, as I did in inculcating them. We have both much to be thankful for!"

They had passed the village; and, now, the majestic pile of de Courcy hall met their view. Grace's cheek grew pale. The doctor observed her change of colour, "and thus it is," he remarked, "that the all-wise disposer of events chequers this mortal life with pleasure and

with pain; we must still my child be thankful for one as for the other."

Grace acquiesced in silence, and the tall trees soon hid this remembrance from her sight.

Ere long, they were seated in the library, the favourite apartment. Grace had enquired into the welfare of every thing, and every body; and, although her absence had seemed an age, yet every thing looked so exactly the same, that it soon appeared like a dream.

"We want only dear Mrs. Stanhope now, papa," said Grace. "But, I am not sorry that she did not accompany us, because I shall be able to set off her apartments more to her taste. She shall have the garden suite, and I will fit up the little boudoir so sweetly, that she will not be in a hurry to return to that odious London."

The doctor smiled, "London has not, I perceive, made a very favourable impression on you Grace?"

"No, indeed, papa, in my eyes it has not one

redeeming quality. I am glad, however, that we went; otherwise, I should never have known Mrs. Stanhope."

"Nor Mr. Falkland!" said the doctor archly.

"No, nor Mr. Falkland!" returned Grace, "he also is a friend worth acquiring."

"Indeed, he is, Grace," replied the doctor, "I esteem him highly, and have asked him to pay us an early visit."

"You look very tired papa. I do not think London has agreed with you."

"In that case, I shall soon be renovated; but I feel quite well, only, perhaps, a little fatigued and excited."

A fortnight elapsed before they heard of Mrs. Stanhope; she, then, wrote to say that 'her friend was no more, having, in fact, expired a few days after her arrival: leaving to her the task of consoling her bereaved child. She found this both difficult and painful; for, young, ardent, unused to disappointment, and, until now, untouched by grief, Lucy Maitland's

sorrow was of that violent and uncontrollable nature, that resists comfort, and feasts itself on dispair. But this, (she observed) must soon wear itself out, and she will then be better reconciled, than if she had borne her affliction with more fortitude. She has few friends; and those so fearful of being burthened with the poor orphan, that my offer of bringing her away was gladly and eagerly caught at by them, and thankfully accepted by Lucy; who, although she will not be consoled, is grateful for the kindness I have shown her.'

Mrs. Stanhope had fixed on the ensuing week to be at Meadlands; and Grace made all her little preparations with eager kindness. Mrs. Stanhope's apartments were adorned with every elegancy that Grace knew she admired. Neither was Miss Maitland forgotten. Grace looked forward, with extreme pleasure, to having a companion so near her own age. It was a pleasure she had never enjoyed. She had never, it is true, felt the want of such a

companion, for her father had been all to her; and, perhaps, the serious and elevated tone of her character had been heightened from this circumstance; for, when youth is companied with youth, it naturally gives way to joyous mirth, and seeks gaiety rather than information. Not for this should youth be deprived of its sweet companionship; it is the spring of life and hope, and its brief season should not be too early checked: to how many is it the only green spot in their weary pilgrimage: and to how many is its short season embittered, by the ambition of parents to overload the minds of their children with knowledge, that they are neither capable of understanding nor willing to appreciate.

To many the seclusion, in which Grace had been reared, would have proved highly prejudicial. They might have become selfish, gloomy and proud. But her own happy temperament, joined to the doctor's excellent care, prevented the ill effects which, sometimes, arise from

want of communion with those of a similar age; whilst it preserved her from the follies that such association is almost sure to engender.

Mrs. Stanhope, and her young charge, were welcomed by Grace and her father with kind and hospitable feeling. Mrs. Stanhope embraced Grace with almost maternal pride and affection, and, presenting Luey Maitland to her, said—

"I have, you see, acceded to your request, and brought you a young companion."

Grace, frankly and affectionately, embraced the young orphan, whose lonely position would have sufficed to awaken her sympathy. This, however, being heightened by her prepossessing appearance, Grace thought that her former pleasing anticipations bade fair to be realised.

Lucy Maitland, just eighteen, looked even younger from the extreme slightness of her figure, which scarcely reached the middle height. A quantity of light brown hair fell, in natural curls, about her neck, and shaded a

countenance which, though at present, bearing the traces of sorrow, appeared to be formed by nature for the expression of mirth. The round and dimpled cheek, full lip, and light blue eye, bespoke a disposition more akin to enjoyment, than to melancholy.

She appeared, at first, shy and timid, but the paternal kindness of the doctor, the sisterly and affectionate manners of Grace, the change of scene, the beauty of every thing around, soon had their effect. Smiles again dimpled her cheeks, which the roses had already revisited, and every day encreased her brilliancy and added to the joyous tone of her voice. She had been at Meadlands about two months, and 'felt (as she said) as though it were her own natural home.'

"What, you are going to your school, Grace!" she said, one morning, seeing her dressed for her walk to the village, "you must not go without me, for, you know, you have promised to make me as good as yourself; but that never will happen! for, if I were to

confess the truth, I feel, at this very moment, more inclined for a walk, or a ride, or a visit to the farm, or the aviary, or—any thing, rather than hearing little girls say their A B C."

Grace smiled, "but we will have our ride, or walk, or any other amusement you like, afterwards, which you will doubly enjoy, from the feeling of having first performed a duty."

"Very true, dear little preacher! but you forget there is old dame Grant, who is very ill, and I know you will spend half the morning at her bed side; besides visiting half a dozen old goodies: and, I prophesy, we shall not be back by luncheon."

"Why, my dear Lucy, it was only the other day you said how much you enjoyed my village peregrinations, and chatted to the old goodies, and nursed the squalling babies, and scolded the ragged headed urchins, etc. etc."

"Yes, so I did, Grace; but you are so very constant: you do the same thing every day, listen to the same old stories, and seem per-

fectly unconscious that you have heard them at least fifty times."

"Were I to be inconstant, what would become of my school? what would become of the poor creatures, who are as much consoled by the interest that I take in their pains and pleasures, as by the relief that my purse affords them?"

"True, dear Grace, you are so much better than I, that, if I did not love you so much, I could find in my heart to be envious of you. What *I* do for mere amusement, or from the impulse of the moment, is done on *your* part, from motives of kindness, arising from a benevolent and feeling heart."

"Hush, Lucy, I never listen to flattery: I am sure your heart is both good and feeling, only you have not been brought up in the habit of thus employing yourself as I have."

Lucy paused and seemed thoughtful, "and yet," she said, "I thought my dear mother very good; I thought myself very good, but we never did any thing of this sort; and, if I

gave to a poor object that happened to cross my path, I imagined I had done all that was necessary!"

"Your mother, dear Lucy, was long in ill health, and could neither exert herself, nor spare you from her side."

"Thank you, love—she was indeed a great sufferer, and that accounts, no doubt, for her never having put me in the way of this sort of thing. But, I shall become better under your tuition, and with your example; you must, always, make me come with you, and I shall learn to prescribe for the old women, and advise the young ones."

They had, by this time, arrived at the village. Grace visited her school, saw that it was all in order, made Lucy assist her in hearing some of the girls read, and, then, went to visit those she thought needed her asssistance.

Amongst these was one poor woman, who had been long ill, and was daily growing worse. As Grace entered the cottage, the poor crea-

ture raised herself up, to bless and thank her.

"Ah, Miss," she said, "I thank God to see you once again! I had a weary night of it! I thought I should not have seen another day. I am going fast Miss Grace! I shall never see another sun rise!"

"My poor Martha," replied Grace, "I hope you are not so bad as you think."

"Oh, dear lady, it's time I should go; of what use to any one am I here, but to give trouble, and cause expense? and, if it had not been for you Miss Grace, my illness would have brought poverty and distress on my poor girl. Ah, I once thought it a sad thing to die, but you have made it easy for me; may God bless you!"

Grace talked to the poor woman, and did all in her power to console and prepare her for her approaching end. As she was about to leave she said.

"My father will come, I am sure, and see if

any thing can be done to relieve you. In the mean time, is there any thing you want?"

"Nothing, Miss Grace; I have every thing, and more than I need. And, last night, who should come down but lord de Courcy's *valet*, Mr. Monaghan, and I thought, to be sure, when I seed him, that my lord was comed home again; and I asked, for I should have liked to have seed him before I went:—he was, like you and the good doctor, Miss Grace, the friend of the poor, only too little amongst his own tenants and people. But Mr. Monaghan said he was not comed home, nor a coming, but was still in foreign parts, and that he was going to him directly. And, then, though I told him that you had sent me all I wanted, Miss, there comed a lot of wine, and cakes and other nice things he thought I should like."

Lucy had not been an inattentive observer of Grace's changing cheek, during this speech, and was about to ask some questions, when Grace interrupted her by bidding Martha fare-

well, and promising that she would accompany her father down in the evening.

Grace had still another visit to pay, but Lucy, who was but an inactive observer of the passing scene, had stopped at the cottage door, and was amusing herself by talking to one of the little urchins, who had just returned from school, and giving her a lecture à la Grace, when she was interrupted, in her attempt of bestowing wisdom, by the darkness of the atmosphere, and the first pattering of a heavy shower.

"There, now, I just thought it would be so! Grace, Grace," she screamed, "it is pouring with rain!"

Grace, who was busy within, and who thought nothing of a shower of rain, did not heed the appeal, and Lucy continued to gaze on the pouring clouds until her attention was attracted by the approach of a man, who, by his dress, appeared to be a higher sort of domestic, and who will immediately be recognised as the last of the Monaghans.

With the modest and respectful bow of true politeness, our Iernian* hero drew near, and accosted her with—

"I'm bowld to take the liberty of thinking, Miss, that you are in prisint want of a parasol; and it would inflict an imminse pleasure on me, Miss, if you'd condescind to honour me with the loan of this." presenting a handsome silk umbrella.

"Thank you," answered Lucy, tickled by his address, "but I believe Miss Shafton will wait till the shower is over."

"Miss Shafton!" exclaimed Larry, "it is'nt out in this ilimental diluge she is? I conjur' you, Miss, by the kindness of your countēnance, unparalleled as it is for brightness and loveliness, God bless it, to insinuate that it's one Larry Monaghan that's in attindance, to guard her from the sprinkle of any wather, bar-

* Iérne, is a translation of two Greek words, signifying *sacred island.*

rin' the holy wather that's filthered into an efficacious and purifying strame, by the prayers and power of his rivirence, the priest, God lane to him! And it's a convincin' shower this same is, Miss; an 'twill howld on till evenin' I'm thinkin."

"Nay, I think the clouds are breaking; we shall have it fine presently."

"I'm feared not, Miss, an' it's a comfort 'twould be to me to accommodate you with the parasol; an' look, Miss, look, the brutes o'clouds is a comin' together agin, like mad; an', powers above, here comes the rain ralely and thruly! Do, I entrate of you, Miss, deprive me o' the parasol, for it's no manner o' use to me on earth, seein' that I'm hardened to the rain, bekase of bein' born in the midst of it, God help me! an' I've a Normal aptitude for it, as the schoolmaster said—poor crathur!"

The shower encreasing in violence, Lucy, unwilling to keep the man standing in the rain,

and seeing that he would neither put up his umbrella nor take shelter, accepted the umbrella, saying, "thank you, and where can it be sent?"

"If it wasn't a requist borthering on bowldness, my dear young lady, to ask premission to accompany you, as in duty bound to any frind of Miss Shafton's—God be about her eternally! an' jist to show the feelin's of affiction that ate me up towards her, an' towards yourself my lady *Luaw**, it's to do that same I'd be afther wishin'!"

"Oh," said Lucy, much amused, "I could not think of it! you would get wet to the skin; so, pray, go and take shelter from the rain."

"Heaven bless you for thinkin' o' sich an unpossibility, any how! but there never was sufficient wather in natur at any one time Miss, to rache so near to me as that. It's *indiarubberable* I am, Miss, to sich an application.

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* *Luaw.* The moon.

Besides, the sthrong desire I have to see Miss Grace—God howld her up aginst the inimies that surround her! Lord above! to think that sich a parigin should draw malice out of any human hearts: the curse o' Crom'ell on 'em! Amin, an' quick!"

"Enemies!" exclaimed Lucy, "I don't understand you."

"How should you, Miss—how should the innicint understand the curves and sirpintine coorses of the wicked!"

At this moment, Grace made her appearance; she changed colour at seeing Larry.

"Oh, my sowl an' glory! here she is, shinin' an' radjint like a partiklar heavenly consternation! An' how are you, Miss Grace? happy an' well, I trust? Ah, spake to the boy that rispictfully dhrames o' you mornin' noon an' night!"

"Thank you, Larry, I am quite well."

"An' its charmed I am to hear it," looking, however, as if he had some doubts of the truth

of her assertion, "but ochone it's bad intirely the musther is; an' so unsocial, an' so melancholy, an' so pale, an' hydrophibious like, I think they call it, that he 'voids his food and divarsion jist like a sick invalid. An' its prayin' I am all night, an' crying I am all day, that the wild times may come back agin, Miss Grace."

"I am sorry," replied Grace, turning her face from Lucy, that she might not betray her heightened colour, "to hear that lord de Courcy is ill, Larry! but the rain has cleared off now, and we will take advantage of the weather while it is fine. Good bye, Larry."

"Clare an' fair be the road forenint you, Miss Grace; an' swate surprise be at the end of it! An' the angels o' heaven stand guard at the door; Amin, my lovely an' beautiful mistress!"

Grace again looked kindly on Larry, and hurried forward.

"My dear Grace," cried Lucy, the moment

they were out of hearing, "who is that extraordinary and most amusing creature? I declare I have been almost dying with laughter at his fine speeches."

"He is the person you heard old Martha mention, lord de Courcy's servant."

"And who is this lord de Courcy?"

"He is the proprietor of that fine old building that you have, so often, remarked."

"Is he young—handsome?"

"Yes he is young, and, I believe, considered handsome."

"Believe!—then, you don't know him? I thought, from what that paragon of politeness Mr.—what is his name, Larry, said, that you were acquainted."

"He has been so very little here," replied Grace, "that—we have not seen much of him."

"Is he agreeable?"

"Yes, perfectly agreeable."

"Young, handsome, agreeable, and, from

old Martha's account, good and amiable! why Grace, you ought to have fallen desperately in love with each other. What a pair you would have made—the lord and lady bountiful of the surrounding country!"

Grace made an effort to laugh as she replied; "He seems neither to admire his country, nor his countrywomen, for he resides chiefly abroad."

"Then I renounce him! what, with such a beautiful park and mansion, and," she added archly, "with such a beautiful neighbour, to desert his country! he must have very bad taste. But see, I declare that model of politeness is following us—or rather *you*, for you appeared to be perfection in his eyes,—with his *parasol!*"—and she burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter.

"For shame, Lucy, do not hurt his kind feelings, by letting him imagine you are laughing at him; for he is, indeed, a model of fidelity and attachment."

Lucy would have asked numerous questions, but they had now arrived at home. Larry had watched them safe in, at what he termed a rispictful distance, and then, with a longing look at the house, turned to retrace his steps. Fortunately for Grace, Lucy's ideas were turned into another channel, for, upon entering the drawing-room, they found a visitor.

Falkland had arrived during their absence: he hastened forward to meet Grace; but, as he observed the friendly warmth of her greeting, so utterly free from emotion, his heart sank, and he sighed involuntarily.

After being introduced to Lucy—"I have come," he said to Grace, "to claim a few days hospitality, in order to enjoy what is so rarely to be met with, and what, since I have had the misfortune to lose your society, I have been altogether deprived of—"

"Nay," said Grace, laughing, "if you make a speech I shall think the country does not agree with you; but, believe me, we are delighed to see you."

"What detained you so late?" asked the doctor, "I was just about to despatch a messenger for you."

"Oh, my dear Sir," began Lucy, "such a morning of adventures"—but Grace interrupted her with an impatience of tone that Lucy had never observed in her before, and that now effected a lodgment in her memory at once.

"Nonsense, my dear papa, do not listen to her!—the fact is, we found poor old Martha so extremely ill that I fear she will scarcely survive the day, and I have promised to accompany you to see her again in the evening. Have I done right, dear sir?"

"Perfectly so, in promising for me my love; but I do not think I shall allow you out again; the evenings are now damp and cold. I will do all that is necessary! But you had some rain, had you not?"

"Yes, a shower;" replied Grace, without looking at Lucy, who had fixed an arch look upon her, which said, 'I suppose I must be

dumb then', "but it was over, before we left Hartly's Cottage."

"Oh quite!" cried Lucy, with a provoking emphasis; "but, my dear doctor, you cannot conceive the progress I am making. I am now perfect in the art of looking on, and listening to Grace's advice, and exhortations, without once hinting that time is fleeting. I have arrived at perfection in the art of lecturing the little boys and girls; and actually played schoolmistress to day, without once indulging the inclination I felt to box the ears of my pupils for their stupidity. In fact, I mean to rival Grace herself."

"You would make yourself out a sad creature!" said Grace, smiling, "but you must not believe her, dear papa, I really believe that she is ashamed to own the interest she takes in all our village affairs."

The weather did not allow of any exercise, for, as Larry had predicted, the rain came on again, and continued for the remainder of the

day. Nevertheless, the time passed cheerfully. Grace exerted herself to make her guests happy and 'at home', and succeeded so admirably, that Falkland could not help feeling, how exquisitely fitted she was to make the happiness of a man of domestic habits and refined tastes. Still, as he gazed upon her with the keen observation of a lover, there was a something in her manner which he could not understand.

She was cheerful, she interested herself in whatever was going forward, but it was the interest of one, who does so only for the pleasure of others, and who is, herself, engaged in other and higher contemplations. When she thought herself unobserved, a pensive shade was visible on her brow, which, however, she shook off the moment any little exertion was required.

This manner was, no doubt, rendered more striking by contrast with the gay, happy, thoughtless demeanour of Lucy; who, amused by every thing, seemed only in search of novelty and diversion.

The doctor did not forget to visit old Martha, but would not allow Grace to accompany him. "You can," he said, "go to-morrow morning; but now you must stay and try to amuse our friend, Falkland, who appears to me to stand in need of your exertions."

Mrs. Stanhope joined the doctor in his raillery upon Falkland's pre-occupation. Starting from his reverie, the latter immediately roused himself and played the agreeable so well, that Lucy declared, as she bade Grace good night, that he was delightfully agreeable and extremely handsome.

Grace determined that she would go early to visit the poor dying woman; and, accordingly, arose with the dawn. As she passed Lucy's door, she paused—"No, I will not disturb her so early!" she thought; so, bidding Jessy follow her with some few delicacies for the poor invalid, she left the house.

The morning was bright but cold, and Grace drew her shawl more closely around her, as

she hastened along the path which conducted to the village. By degrees her step grew slower, and when she arrived at the spot, from whence the old hall was visible, she paused—her eyes were fixed upon the ancient pile—they filled with tears as the thought pressed upon her, that, perhaps, in order to avoid her, its owner wandered in a foreign land.

Suddenly, a rustling in the hedge startled her; she hurried forward, but the quick bark of a dog arrested her attention, and, as she turned to see from whence it proceeded, she peceived the animal eagerly pursuing her. In a moment, it had reached her, jumping, caressing, wagging its tail, and showing all those symptoms of delight which that faithful animal is wont to do when recognising an old friend. Grace immediately recognised Faithful, a favourite little spaniel of de Courcy's. He had been his almost constant companion, and had become as fond of Grace as of his master.

She stopped overpowered by emotion, the

tears that had been ready to flow, now chased each other down her cheek, as, with trembling hands, she stooped to caress the dog.

"Ah, Faithful," she exclaimed, "*you*, at least, have not forgotten me! you still love your old friend."

The animal replied by leaping into her arms, and redoubling his marks of affection. Whilst engaged in caressing her old favourite, Grace again thought she heard a rustling in the hedge. Looking attentively, she perceived the figure of a man standing close under it. Somewhat alarmed, she stood, for a moment, irresolute; then, concluding that it must be Larry, she was about to relinquish Faithful, when the figure made one step forward, as if to break through the boundary that separated them. At the same instant, footsteps were heard rapidly approaching, and Mr. Falkland made his rather abrupt appearance. With the ardour of a lover, he flew to Grace's side, not, however, failing to observe the dog, and to notice that

a low whistle, from the other side of the hedge, had summoned it away immediately on his arrival.

"I hope you will forgive me for following you," said he, as he drew Grace's arm within his, "the truth is, I was sallying forth for a solitary walk, when I learned, from Jessy, that you were already in the field, and the temptation of joining you was not to be withstood. But what is the matter—you tremble, and seem agitated—has any thing alarmed you?"

Grace was, indeed, agitated; for the one step that the person behind the hedge advanced, had convinced her that it was de Courcy himself. She trembled violently, and was obliged to lean against the gate, that led to the village, which they had now reached.

"What has happened to alarm you?" he repeated, looking anxiously and enquiringly, first at her pale face, then all around, to see if he could discover the cause.

"Nothing," said Grace,—"at least, nothing

that ought to have alarmed me—I was startled by a dog leaping suddenly out of the hedge. But I am quite well now:" she added, trying to smile, and renewing her walk; "it was very foolish."

Falkland thought it very strange, for he had caught sight of the dog, and it appeared to him, that Grace had seemed any thing but alarmed at its presence. Could it have been his unexpected appearance that had caused this agitation? the thought sent a thrill of joy through his heart—yet, she evinced no emotion yesterday; true, but she might have heard of his arrival previous to entering the room.

"I dare say, Miss," said Jessy, "it was Mr. Tomkins, the steward, who often takes the dogs out; and, indeed, I'm almost sure I saw him going down by the hedge as we came up."

Grace assented, not, however, giving Jessy much credit for mistaking de Courcy for his steward.

They had now arrived at Martha's cottage, which Grace entered.

"It is all over, Miss!" said the poor woman's daughter, "my mother went off about two o'clock, and her last words were blessings on you, and the doctor, and lord de Courcy."

Grace said a few words of condolence, then, desiring the young woman to send for any thing she might want, she left the cottage.

Both Grace and Falkland were silent for some time. The former was feeling, rather than thinking, how strange it was that her name should be so constantly coupled with that of de Courcy in the village; and she started, as Falkland said abruptly.

"De Courcy, it seems, is much beloved in the neighbourhood: I did not know he had ever resided here!"

"A very short time," replied Grace, "during which, however, he did a great deal of good."

"He is a noble fellow!" he remarked; "It is a pity he has the mania for residing abroad; it is almost a sin to leave this fine estate to the management of agents."

Grace did not reply. The morning had become clouded, and a drizzling rain began to fall. Before they reached the house, it became a decided shower; and, as Falkland felt the slight frame of Grace shiver from the cold, he hurried her forward, and, upon entering the house, entreated her to hasten and change her damp garments. The tender solicitude of his voice and manner did not escape Grace; and it was with a feeling of deep regret that she found him still nourishing a sentiment which must ultimately end in disappointment. She could never return his love; and determining to check all further hope as far as she possibly could, she dismissed the subject, or rather, the one already uppermost took sole possession of her mind.

Yes, had it not been for the arrival of Falkland, she was sure that de Courcy would, in another moment, have been at her side. Poor Falkland suffered from the reflection, and his persevering attachment appeared in most un-

pleasing colours. Yet, why should she wish to see de Courcy? what could he have to say to her? and, above all, why was he in England, and in the home of his fathers thus incognito, when the whole neighbourhood would have rejoiced to welcome him? Why had Falkland come so inopportunely? why could she not solve the mystery—for, evidently, there was one that hung over the actions of de Courcy? Larry, too, had said that he was ill. These thoughts crowded upon Grace's mind with overwhelming rapidity. Then came one that brought the burning blush to her cheek. 'He must have seen her caress the dog; he must have remarked her emotion;—what would he think?'

The summons to breakfast obliged her to compose herself.

Her pale face soon attracted the attention of the whole party. "You forget my child that we are in November," said the doctor, "I must, now, restrict your walks to the middle of the day."

"I am delighted to hear it," cried Lucy, "for I was anticipating that to become really a pattern, I, also, must get up by candle light, to take a walk before breakfast, which would have been the sorest trial of all."

Falkland remained nearly three weeks at Meadlands, during which time, Grace, without wounding his feelings, endeavoured to convince him that her sentiments were unchanged. Her health was really delicate, and she made it an excuse for absenting herself, as much as possible, from the daily walks and rides.

She found Lucy invaluable; she had quite recovered her spirits, and took from her the necessity of exertion. She was ready for every thing, and entered into whatever occupation or amusement was going forward, with a vivacity that enlivened and gave pleasure to all.

It was the evening after Falkland's departure: the little party were assembled in the drawing-room. 'There is always a blank felt

after the departure of an agreeable guest.' All appeared to acknowledge this feeling, except, perhaps, Grace, and to her Falkland's departure was rather a relief. Not that she did not highly esteem him, but she had judged it necessary to put some restraint upon herself, in order to check the hopes she feared he had formed. She was, therefore, (an unusual thing) the most lively of the party.

"Come, Lucy," she cried, "you are idle to-night; you will neither sing, play, nor talk! what is the matter?"

"Nothing, only I do not feel inclined either to sing, or to play."

"And, as for talking, Grace," said Mrs. Stanhope, "why you have had it all to yourself! I do not think I ever heard you talk so much since I have known you."

"Well," replied Grace, laughing, "this is quite a new accusation; is it not dear papa?"

The doctor smiled.

"One would really imagine," said Lucy,

"that Grace is glad to lose Mr. Falkland's society."

Grace felt there was some truth in the remark, and replied—"No, not glad, certainly, but I own I do not feel very sad upon it; he has promised to spend the Christmas with us, which will soon be here."

"Do, dear Sir, read to us!" cried Lucy to the doctor; "Mrs. Stanhope will not talk, Grace will not sing, and your humble servant is too stupid to do any thing; so I move that we employ our fingers, whilst you improve our intellects."

The doctor, good humouredly, complied with her request; but, when he had read a short time, Grace observed that he did not read with his usual spirit, and said—

"I think, dear papa, you seem tired. Let me read for you."

"Not tired, Grace, but I certainly have a headache, which is rather an unusual thing for me; so I will resign the book to you."

Grace looked tenderly and anxiously at her father; insisted upon his taking the easy chair, and seemed quite incapable of reading.

The doctor smiled as he affectionately kissed her cheek. "This," he said, "is the consequence of always being well: the least pain alarms you; but, my dear Grace, do not look so uneasy, I shall be quite well to-morrow."

Grace took up the book, and the evening soon passed away.

When the guests had retired to rest, Grace bade her father good night, and received the blessing he always bestowed before they separated. It was the doctor's custom to remain up for a short time reading; but, on this evening, Grace begged him not to do so. "Do go to bed, dear papa, at once; it will be better for your head."

"My head is better, dear child; but I shall not remain long."

Once more bidding him good night, she left the room. She felt no inclination to sleep,

and, having dismissed Jessy, took up a book. Half an hour passed, and yet she had not heard her father retire to his room. Restless, and anxious, she listened attentively, and allowed another quarter of an hour to elapse. It was nearly midnight, so, taking up her candle, she determined to warn him of the hour. Could he have passed, and she not have heard him? She went softly to his room, and gently opened the door; the fire had burnt quite hollow and was nearly out—the bed vacant! "Why does he remain up so late?" thought Grace; and immediately descended to the drawing-room; she opened the door, but what was her agony, her terror, when she beheld her idolized parent stretched on the ground, apparently lifeless!

She rushed towards him—called upon him—endeavoured to raise him—then, with frantic violence, pulled the bell, but, recollecting that it rang only in the lower offices, she flew into the hall, and, seizing on that which communi-

cated with the servants' rooms, above, she rang it with equal impetuosity.

Fortunately, Mrs. Trimmer, the housekeeper, having remained up later than usual, was not yet in bed, and alarmed by the ringing, hastened down stairs; but the poor old lady's consternation was so great, upon finding what had happened, that it was some time before she was aroused into utility.

Grace was sitting upon the ground, and had contrived to raise her beloved parent's head, which she was supporting on her knees. "Hasten," she cried, to the terrified housekeeper, "hasten, arouse the servants, despatch Jones to—— for Dr. Warburton! let some one else go to the village, and bring the surgeon; he will be here sooner—fly—lose not a moment!"

Mrs. Trimmer, recalled, by her young mistress' voice, to a sense of what was necessary to be done, lost no time in obeying these directions—"And, now," said Grace, "let

some one come hither, that we may try and raise him to the sofa." She had already unbound his neckcloth, and continued chafing his hands and forehead, and making a thousand efforts to recall him to life.

"He breathes, he breathes!" she exclaimed, "oh God, preserve him to me!"

The whole household was, by this time, stirring. Mrs. Stanhope and Lucy, alarmed by the ringing, and the running to and fro, had hastily arisen; and, throwing around them some loose garments, quickly descended. They soon learned the melancholy news, and hurried to see if they could be of any assistance; but the doctor was already raised to the couch, and nothing further could be done until the arrival of the surgeon.

There was a terrible silence during the half hour that elapsed, ere the latter made his appearance. Looks and whispers were exchanged, but no one dared to speak to Grace, or to offer a word of hope or comfort. No

voice broke the awful stillness; all felt that she could not, at that moment, listen to the words of consolation. She was wrapt in one intense feeling. She knelt, and gazed upon the insensible form; she held the hand that had so often returned the pressure of hers—now, heedless of her touch—she listened, with breathless impatience, for the approach of the surgeon; and was perfectly unconscious of any thing else: she saw no one—heeded nothing.

At last, and, in point of fact, before they could have hoped it, the village practitioner arrived; he hesitated not a moment, but said the patient must instantly be bled.

At this operation, to the infinite joy of his eagerly watching child, Dr. Shafton showed some slight symptoms of returning life; his eyes opened, and the first object they encountered was the almost distracted countenance of his child.

Grace would have thrown her arms round him, but the surgeon restrained her; whispering

to her the necessity of keeping him quiet, and perfectly free from agitation. With the help of the servants, he got him to bed, and then requested Mrs. Stanhope to keep Grace from him for the present.

"If," he said, "there be hope, it can be rendered available only by the most perfect tranquillity."

Mrs. Stanhope communicated to Grace, the desire of Mr. Wilton, that, for a short period, she should leave her father's room; gently urging the necessity of compliance. She suffered herself to be led away, and, when Mrs. Stanhope, in the kindest tones, entreated her to calm her fears and resign herself to the will of the Almighty, she wrung her hand, but replied not; her eyes were tearless; her face was pale as marble; her limbs shook; but she uttered no complaint, she shed no tear.

Dr. Warburton now arrived, and hastened to the apartment of the patient, where, with Mr. Wilton, he remained some hours—hours of

awful suspense to the anxious watchers. When he entered the drawing-room, Grace rose, went towards him, and, with a voice of unnatural calmness, said, "Let me know the worst, I am prepared!"

Dr. Warburton took her hand kindly, and led her to a seat. "My dear young lady," he said, "Dr. Shafton is now somewhat recovered. I will not disguise from you that his state is alarming: but no means shall be left untried."

Grace raised her eyes to heaven; she seemed to be inwardly imploring fortitude from that power, which can alone support us under great affliction.

"Have you any idea," asked Dr. Warburton, "how long he had remained, before you found what had happened?"

"It could not have exceeded three quarters of an hour; but I think, most probably, was not so much."

"I thought so! Had not your anxiety prompted you to descend, as you did, there could have been no hope!"

"May I not go to him?" asked Grace, with an imploring accent.

"Certainly, my dear; only be careful not to agitate him."

When she had left the room, he shook his head, and said, "It is cruel, and useless to keep her from him, for nothing can save him!"

Lucy burst into tears.

"I wish," said the physician, "that I could see that poor child cry! She will need all your care!"

"She shall be to me as my own daughter." replied Mrs. Stanhope fervently.

It is painful to dwell on the scene of affliction which followed. Dr. Shafton survived only two days, during which, Grace never, for a moment, left his room. The first day he was conscious of every thing passing around him; but, aware that he should not long remain so, he endeavoured to employ these few short hours in preparing the mind of Grace, and endeavouring to resign her to his death.

It was beautiful to see how, in order to console his beloved child, he struggled against the disease that overpowered him. His voice was low and inarticulate, and, yet, he laboured to impress upon her mind that she was not to grieve for him; but to look forward to the time when they should be re-united to part no more.

Towards the evening he beckoned Mrs. Stanhope to approach, and, as she took his hand, he pressed hers and placed it in that of Grace.

"I will," she said, understanding his meaning, "I will watch over, and protect her! She is the child of my adoption—she shall be to me as a daughter!"

The doctor smiled, again pressed her hand, and, turning his face towards Grace, said, in a voice growing every moment more inarticulate, "And you, Grace, promise me to be consoled; it is my last request, and it will make me die happy to hear you make me the promise."

Grace tried to speak, but the effort was beyond her powers, and, choking with grief, she hid her face in the bed clothes. "Would to God I could die with him!" she sobbed.

"Look up, Grace, look up, and pain not his last moments, by giving way to your grief; give him now an earnest that you will comply with his last request!"

Grace raised her head; her father's eyes were fixed earnestly upon her—I will promise, my father, I will try—and may God assist me!"

"Amen!" replied her father. "God bless you, my child; remember—for my sake!"

He had made the last effort. A calm and satisfied expression spread itself over his fine and benevolent countenance; but he spoke no more. For some time, he seemed to be in communion with his creator—then sank into a lethargic sleep, which gradually terminated in death.

CHAPTER VI.

GRACE SHAPTON'S grief was of that deep concentrated kind, that does not seek relief in sighs and tears. It is impossible to describe what her father had been to her; parent, companion, friend; the whole warmth of her affectionate heart had been centered in him. Her deep and pious affection had enabled her to struggle with, and partly to overcome, the most poignant disappointment that the heart of woman can know—she would not pain him by giving way to melancholy, and repining—and

now—he was gone——alas, the sad, the terrible blank that her after existence must be!

Grace had, however, one consolation, one that only the truly pious can know. The blow came from the hand of him, whose justice and mercy are unspeakable—she bowed herself to his will. "He has called him to himself;" she inwardly ejaculated, "and I shall again see him. I shall be with him in the presence of my Redeemer." Yes, when she thought of his spotless character, of his truly christian life, she had, we repeat, a consolation that we hope many, under similar trials, possess.

Mrs. Stanhope's presence, spared Grace all those details which, as mere forms, are so painful to the heart of the real mourner. She attended to every thing that was necessary; sent for Dr. Shafton's professional man, and wrote to his few old and valued friends.

Great was the consternation of the surrounding poor; and sorrowful was the sight, when the funeral procession left the precincts

of the park. Not only their own immediate neighbourhood, but the adjoining villages for miles, sent forth their poor to weep for the loss of their general benefactor. Think of this ye that revel in the lap of idleness and luxury, without stretching forth your hands to assist the needy; ye that revel in pleasure and abundance, yet pass unnoticed by the dwelling of the widow and the fatherless. Remember, it is written—'The poor shall not want in the midst of the land!' and again—'Thou shalt not shut thine heart from thy brother who is poor.'

Lucy, unable to control her own grief, and fearful of encreasing the silent suffering of her friend, left the house, and sought some spot where she could, without restraint, give way to her sorrow. Unheeding whither she went, she took the path which led to the village, and, arrived at the little gate, before mentioned. She leaned upon it, and gave vent to her oppressed heart by a violent burst of tears. Utterly absorbed by her grief, she remained, for some

time, without perceiving a stranger, who stood apparently waiting an opportunity of addressing her. When, however, she did perceive him, she was hastening to retire, but the stranger, with an elegance of manner in which sympathy was prominent, approached most respectfully, and in the soft and quiet language of good breeding, thus addressed her—

"Pardon the intrusion, Madam! I have heard, only this morning, of the irreparable loss that the neighbourhood has sustained, by the death of that excellent and respected man Dr. Shafton, and, concluding from your presence here, and the affliction evinced by your manner, that you are intimate with the family, I presume to enquire how Miss Shafton bears this great affliction?"

"Alas!" returned Lucy, "a stranger would say that she bore it well; but we, who know her—who know the great command that Grace Shafton exercises over her feelings—would rather see her weep and wring her hands, as I

do, than observe the deep and silent anguish that consumes her."

The stranger appeared to be deeply affected—

"And her health?" he enquired.

"We tremble for it; for, although she tries to resign herself to the will of the Almighty, no one can look upon her patient yet pressing affliction, without feeling powerfully affected. I cannot bear it!"

"Change of scene!" muttered the stranger, in a hoarse trembling voice,—"but, of course, those most interested—that is, those most privileged to advise,—will suggest that necessity. Removing Miss Shafton from the scene of her loss, will best serve to make it supportable." Then thanking Lucy, and bowing politely, the stranger was about to withdraw, when the former exclaimed.

"You will, perhaps, allow me to mention to Mrs. Stanhope, the name of the friend, who has expressed so kind an interest in her charge. She will, I know, be most grateful for any suggestion."

"I regret that I have not the honor of being, at present, ranked amongst the number of Miss Shafton's friends; but the characters of the late doctor, and his daughter, have rendered them interesting to every heart. I can only hope that those privileged to contribute to her happiness may be successful in their efforts to console her." And bowing he passed on, and with so quick a step that he was out of sight immediately.

"Very strange!" thought Lucy, as she watched his retiring steps, "not a friend, and yet so deeply interested—so elegant—so handsome."

She did not fail to communicate this event to Mrs. Stanhope, but greatly to her disappointment, that lady did not think it at all extraordinary; it was no doubt some one of the surrounding gentry, who could not fail being interested for Grace under such a calamity.

"But," persisted Lucy, "he was so extremely distinguished in his manners, so elegant,—with a bow like a nobleman's."

"And is a nobleman's bow different from that of other men?" asked Mrs. Stanhope, smiling; "I assure you, Lucy, some of them are awkward enough."

"Possibly," replied Lucy, rather pettishly, "but this was no common country gentleman." And though she gave up the point, she did not give up her opinion that the stranger was nothing less than a lord. Yes, it was some great personage, some one violently in love with Grace; and having settled this point to her own satisfaction, she must leave to time the further elucidation of the mystery.

Dr. Shafton's affairs were found in the strictest order; he had left every thing to Grace: having taught her how to dispose of wealth, could he do better than to leave it in her hands?

Some months passed away, but, in spite of the efforts Grace made to reward the solicitude of her friends by trying to be cheerful, her health sank under this severe trial. She

became daily paler and thinner, and Dr. Warburton advised change of scene as indispensable to the restoration of her health. "Yes," he exclaimed energetically, when speaking on the subject to Mrs. Stanhope, "an entire change of scene. I should prefer change of climate, a continental tour, for instance."

The idea was instantly acted upon. Grace acknowledged her disinclination to leave Meadlands, especially for so long a period. But Mrs. Stanhope was determined; she reminded her of her promise to her dying parent, and of the many duties she had to perform. "You," she remarked, "so useful, so necessary to the welfare of those surrounding you—placed by the Almighty in a situation which enables you to benefit others, you, my dear young friend, will be highly culpable if you do not consent to try those means pointed out as most likely to re-establish your health."

"It shall be as you wish dear, kind friend;" replied Grace, "if you really think it necessary."

"I should be sorry to wait till it became an absolute necessity; it would then be too late. I have long wished to pay a visit to the continent, and shall be delighted to accompany you."

CHAPTER VII.

PERHAPS many of our readers will be of opinion that Lucy was not very far wrong in her conjectures respecting the stranger; and are ready to believe, with her, that it was no uninterested person who made those anxious enquiries concerning Grace's welfare. In order to give some clue to this mystery, we will enquire what de Courcy has been doing all this while.

We left him, after his interview with Talbot, in no very happy state of mind. Grace was lost to him, and that at the very moment when he had

discovered that there existed no impediment—that there never had existed one to their union. This was, in itself, enough to madden him; but when, in addition, came the reflection of his sister's treachery, her meanness, her falsehood, his heart was a prey to the keenest anguish. Talbot, also, had eluded his vengeance, but, this he did not regret. "No," he thought, "I would not have the blood of the vile wretch upon my hands; I am spared, at least, the misery of having become a murderer!"

Day after day, he expected, with impatience, an answer from Dr. Shafton. He had, he trusted, at least, shown himself worthy of *excuse* in the eyes of that gentleman; and he awaited his answer with an anxiety that baffles description. But no answer arrived. Was it possible that he did not intend to reply to his letter? He questioned François—had he left the letters at the right house—had he enquired for Dr. Shafton? François asserted that he had positively done so; and when, at last, a

week elapsed, and no answer was returned, de Courcy, with indignant and wounded feelings, prepared to leave town. His final destination was the continent, but he first visited an estate in Derbyshire.

Upon arriving at Delamere he found much was wanting—his tenantry oppressed, and his estate in disorder. He, therefore, spent some weeks there, living a life of almost perfect seclusion.

The daily papers, as they laid on his breakfast table, were taken up, with a trembling agitation: the nervous expectation of seeing the announcement of Grace Shafton's marriage, continually haunted him. But, day after day, week after week passed, and no such announcement took place. Finally, in looking over the departures, he saw Dr. and Miss Shafton, for their seat in Gloucestershire. She had left London, and she was still Miss Shafton! but, she might intend to be married in the country. It was most probable, and Falkland would with-

out doubt, soon follow. But a week afterwards, Falkland's departure for another part of the country was announced. De Courcy felt a restless desire to know the exact state of things; he told himself, in vain, that there was no hope, yet, would he have given worlds to see Grace, and speak to her once more.

Suddenly, he took the resolution of paying a short visit to de Courcy Hall; and, summoning Larry, bade him prepare for the journey, but added, "It is my wish, Larry, that, when there, you keep as much within the precincts of the park as possible, or, if you must be wandering, take care not to mention that I am at the hall. I shall remain there only a few days, and wish to be quite alone: Do you understand Larry?"

"Surely, your honor, surely! and it's sartain that, if your lordship wishes to remain incognity, I must not be seen; for who would iver expect to see Larry Monaghan, without your lordship's bein' to the fore?"

"Very true," replied de Courcy, smiling at Larry's conceit, "very true, so you must keep yourself close."

His arrival was so unexpected, that the servants could not have spread the news, and his strict, almost stern, orders that it might not be mentioned, had the desired effect, for, though generally mild, Mr. Tomkins knew he was not to be disobeyed with impunity.

Poor Larry, for the first day or two, kept within bounds; but his melancholy face and restless demeanour, showed sufficiently what torture this restraint was to him; and, at last, de Courcy bade him do as he pleased, provided that he kept his own arrival secret.

Larry waited no further permission, but took his way to the village in great hope of getting a sight of Jessy; but, in this, he was disappointed. He learned however old Martha's illness, and took back to de Courcy the whole news of what was going forward at Meadlands; Mrs. Stanhope's arrival with Miss Maitland,

and a fresh importation of Grace's perfections.

"No other guest," asked de Courcy, "nor any other expected?"

"Not that I hare of, my lord!"

De Courcy's heart beat quick; 'no Falkland, no report of her marriage: had he been again deceived.'

He wandered perpetually near the boundary that separated the two estates, which, at one part, was divided by only a slight hedge. He often caught sight of Grace, as she took her walk towards the village; but she was never alone. Frequently did he follow her, and her companion; he could hear her voice, he could sometimes distinguish a sentence—a kind sentiment—a generous feeling.

One morning, having passed a sleepless night, he arose with the dawn; and to relieve the restlessness within, took his usual walk. He had no hope of seeing Grace—it was too early. Faithful was the companion of his stroll.

What, however, was his surprise, upon reaching the spot we have mentioned, to see her hastening down the path! His heart beat, he felt uncertain: a moment before, and he would have given worlds for the opportunity of speaking to her, and now that it presented itself, he scarcely dared approach. She drew still nearer—she paused—her eyes were directed towards the hall—he thought there were tears in those eyes.

At this moment, Faithful recognised his old mistress, and, scrambling through the hedge, accosted her with delight. She stopped, she stooped towards the dog, caressed, wept over him, and, in another moment, de Courcy, his heart bounding with hope, would have been at her side; but ere he could accomplish his purpose—another stood there—another—and that other was Falkland! For a moment he watched them, saw him draw Grace's arm tenderly within his own, heard him address her in, what he supposed, the soft accents of love;—

yes, it was too evident—Falkland was the favoured, the accepted, lover.

Calling the dog to his side, he, with hasty strides, traversed the park, and as Larry expressed it, 'instantly, like a diminted person, set off on his return for Delamare.'

Poor Larry was sadly puzzled: he could not understand matters at all. Now that the plot against his peace, and against the peace of the dear young lady, had been detected, why were not things as they used to be? He felt confident that his master loved Grace, and could not, by any means, unravel the mystery.

With de Courcy all uncertainty was now over, and he prepared to leave England in good earnest. He determined to remain on the continent, until he could hear with tolerable calmness, that Grace Shafton was the wife of another. Until then, he would not return; and, in pursuance of this resolution, he prepared for a long absence. To do this effectually, he was obliged again to visit the hall for a day or

two; which he did with the same precaution as before.

"What is the matter, Larry?" asked de Courcy, the day after his arrival, on observing the dejected countenance of his faithful domestic, "are you ill?"

"Och, no, my lord!" sighed Larry.

"You are unhappy then?"

"No, your honour, not jist unhappy, only distrissed in mind it is; that's all, your lordship."

"What is it? If you have any favour to ask, speak out."

"Favour is it, my lord? och, sure then your honour niver gives any body the throuble of asking for any thin'."

Lord de Courcy was silent. "Give me my shooting jacket, Larry."

"Your shootin' jackey, my lord? an' sure, it isn't this day, of all others, that your lordship will put it on?"

"Why not?"

"I don't know, my lord; 'twas an impression I had."

"You're very mysterious this morning, Larry."

"Good rason, your honour, good rason, as the lagions in heaven knows!"

"It is confined, perhaps, to their cognizance, Larry, and you think it sacrilege to entrust it to your master's notice."

"Thrue for you, my lord, it would be, I'm thinking, a sacrilije to tell you that which would make you more drary; for, indeed and double-deed, the day is as dark to me as whin my poor ould mother was taken out o' the land o' the livin'—the heavens be her perch this day!—an', sure it isn't so much for him that is gone,—for if ever a sowl is gone to glory, it is yours Dr. Shafton—but for the poor angel cratur that's left to weep for you!"

"Good God! Larry, what do you mean? you do not mean to say that Dr. Shafton is dead?"

"He's goin' to be carried to his grave, this blessed mornin', my lord."

De Courcy was struck with horror and astonishment: at last he said "I never knew that he was ill."

"No more did he himself, my lord!"—and Larry proceeded to relate all that he had heard (which happened to be a pretty correct representation of what had really taken place) concerning the melancholy event.

"And, you say he is to be buried to day, Larry!"

"They'll be jist a carryin' him out now, I'm thinkin', an' if your honour would like to pay him the rispict of seein' him laid in the cowld clay, why, your lordship would jest be there in time."

"I will, Larry. Find me a suit of black!" and de Courcy hastened to the church, where he arrived in time to see the doctor's remains consigned to the tomb. He was deeply affeeted, and, when he reflected on the dreadful blow

this would be to Grace, he trembled for her health.

It was in returning that de Courcy encountered Lucy, when the conversation, we have already recorded, took place.

With a heavy heart, he reached home, and, in a few days, was again on his way to the continent.

CHAPTER VIII.

It was the beginning of March, when Grace Shafton bade farewell to her beloved home. It seemed to her like a second separation from him whom she had lost, and she would fain have lingered on, but she knew that her friends were actuated by the kindest interest for her, and could not, herself, be insensible to her daily loss of strength.

Paris was their first destination, but, upon arriving at Dovor, the weather was so tempestuous, that they resolved to wait a few days, in hopes of a calmer sea.

Grace was fond of the sea-side, which she had often visited with her father, but Lucy who had never before seen the sea, was in extacies.

"Come, dear Grace, come," she exclaimed, after having gazed for some time from the window, "do wrap yourself up, and let us walk to the pier; you know Dr. Warburton said the sea air would be of much service to you."

Grace smiled, for Lucy had forgotten that Dr. Warburton had also desired her to be careful to avoid the cold winds of the present month. She was, however, too regardless of self, to hesitate, so wrapping herself up, accompanied her eager companion.

They were soon at the pier-head, watching the dashing of the waves. There was scarcely a creature there but themselves, and Grace enjoyed the view of the tossing and angry waters almost as much as Lucy.

But the wind, cold and cutting, pierced the delicate frame of Grace, and Lucy, awakening to her imprudence, exclaimed—

"How selfish of me to bring you out in this cold wind!" and seizing her arm, they hastily began to retrace their steps.

Suddenly, Grace felt her companion start, and, looking in her face to discover the reason, beheld it suffused with a bright glow. "What is the matter, Lucy?"

"Nothing, only I fancied—and—yes—it is Mr. Falkland, coming to meet us."

His appearance had a very different effect upon Grace: she thought of the last time she had seen him: she shook with emotion, and the tear stole to her eye.

A silent pressure of the hand was all that Grace could answer, to the warm and anxious greeting of Falkland: he understood her feelings, and began talking to Lucy.

"Now, Mr. Falkland," asked the latter, "what fairy could possibly have whispered to you that we were here; for, of course, you have come for the express purpose of taking leave of us, before we begin our pilgrimage?"

"Be assured a most kind and excellent fairy, and one to whom I am much beholden."

"And she, no doubt, conjured up the winds and waves on purpose to prevent our departure, otherwise we should not have seen you?"

"Indeed, I had my fears, I assure you, for, I arrived in London just a day too late, and feared that the same fate awaited me here."

"Then, you really did come to bid us good bye? Why, I was only joking."

"I really did! Is it so very surprising?"

The question appeared to embarrass Lucy, but, as they had now arrived at the hotel, she was relieved from the necessity of a reply.

Falkland had already seen Mrs. Stanhope, for, arriving immediately after Grace and Lucy had set out, he found that lady busy writing letters; from her he learnt the direction of their walk, and hastened to follow.

He had, now, a better opportunity of observing Grace, and was shocked at her altered

appearance. "It is rather too cold for you to be out." he said, glancing anxiously at her shivering and fragile form.

"And that was my fault;" remarked Lucy, "I know she went out only to oblige me, but, indeed, Dr. Warburton said that the sea air would benefit her."

"Particularly, on a cold bleak day in the beginning of March;" observed Mrs. Stanhope, "and at the head of the pier. Oh, Lucy, you are an excellent nurse!"

"Never mind, dear Lucy; I enjoyed the walk, and do not feel the worse for it; I only regret that I am not able to be out as much as you would like; but, now that Mr. Falkland has come, he will show you the lions."

Falkland was, of course, obliged to express his willingness, and Lucy, of course, blushed and was happy.

In a few days the weather became sufficiently mild to enable them to embark for Calais. Falkland saw them on board. "I am half in-

clined to see you safe over." he said, looking at Grace for an approving glance.

"Oh, that *would* be delightful!" cried Lucy, "It is only three hours."

"You forget, my dear girl," remarked Grace gravely, "that Mr. Falkland could not return immediately, and that he has nothing on board."

"True, I am a thoughtless creature!" and Lucy turned away her head, to hide a feeling of embarrasment.

Falkland wished, in his heart, that Grace had not been quite *so thoughtful;* but her manner convinced him that she did not desire his further attendance.

"Well," he said, "if you remain long in Paris, I may, perhaps, see you there, for I am thinking of paying it a visit."

This time Lucy said nothing; but Mrs. Stanhope and Grace, expressed their hope that he would really do so.

"At all events," he said, "you will, I hope,

let me hear from you—Mrs. Stanhope, Miss Shafton—is it too much for an old *friend* to ask?"

The emphasis on the word *friend*, did not escape Grace, she coloured slightly; but, holding out her hand frankly, promised they would *all* take the correspondence in hand, and, then she said smiling, "I think you will repent your request."

"Thank you, and God bless you all!" The bell rang, and, in another minute, they were on their way.

Notwithstanding the fatigues of travelling, Grace was decidedly improved in health upon their arrival in Paris.

Mrs. Stanhope took upon herself all the arrangements, and they were soon established in a very elegant suite of apartments in the Rue Castiglione.

The weather was bright and clear, and the scene afforded by the gardens of the Tuileries, ever cheerful. All the morning, the gay resort

is occupied by the smart bonnes, and their elegantly, not to say fantastically, dressed little charges. Then, as the day grows later, come the mamas and the sisters, to lounge under the shade of the trees, and to listen to the compliments of the beaux, who soon arrive to take their part in the scene.

Every one must confess that the very atmosphere of Paris is exhilirating; it is always clear and bright, with neither fogs nor smoke, to obscure the sunshine, or oppress the spirits of the inhabitants.

Grace's deep mourning, was an excuse for her not appearing much in society; and she found ample amusement in the novelty of the scene. There are so many things in Paris to be seen; so many things worthy of being seen, that the stranger cannot fail of finding entertainment.

Mrs. Stanhope met numerous friends—we should, perhaps, say, acquaintances, and finding it difficult to avoid their society, she tried to

persuade Grace to accompany her to some parties; but Grace was inexorable, and a long argument ensued on the subject.

"My dear Madam," said Grace, one morning, having just heard Mrs. Stanhope refuse to join a gay party, "I think this unkind of you! you make me feel as if I were an unpleasant restraint; and there is Lucy too, dying to see something of *Parisien* life and manners; you must, for her sake, promise me that you will no longer confine yourself upon my account."

"My dear Grace," observed Lucy, "I have no wish to go without you."

"Fie, you will not, perhaps, have so good an opportunity another time! I shall think you are in league to compel me to do that which would, really, interfere with my comfort and feelings."

"Not so, my dear Grace," answered Mrs. Stanhope, "but I confess I agree with Lucy, and should feel no pleasure in going out without you."

"I am sure you would feel none in going out with me at present; but, come, we will make a compact. If I promise sometimes to accompany you to a quiet party, you must not refuse to take Lucy to the more gay ones."

"Well, we shall see!" replied Mrs. Stanhope, glad of the chance of getting Grace out at all. "But, positively, here is Mrs. Melody's carriage."

"Oh, dear Grace, let us make our escape!" and Lucy, seizing her arm, dragged her friend out of the room. They were soon, arm in arm, amidst the gay groups in the Tuileries; admiring the happy children,—some skipping, some dancing, others playing at ball, all in exercise, all happy, and all dressed in such costly materials, that an English mother would have scarcely, permitted a child, so apparelled to move out of her sight. (We cannot say that we think it adds to the beauty, certainly not to the simplicity, of childhood, to deck it out in satins and velvets;—but *Parisien* mothers

think differently*.)

"How delighful, to have escaped from that most dreadfully melodious lady!" cried Lucy, "she always talks me into a headache; so that I never hear the sound of her voice, without feeling the symptoms of one approaching."

"Why don't you ask her to sing, then?" asked Grace, smiling.

"Dreadful! I am, then, obliged to bring on a fit of coughing, in order to hide my risibility. I really think she imagines, that that poor little Baron, whom she is dragging about with her, is desperately in love with her."

"Then I fear she is mistaken, if I may judge from the expressive glances he throws at some one else."

"If you mean me, they have been quite thrown away, I assure you; he is not to my taste!"

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* The authoress, if permitted a personal opinion, owns to her feeling a far greater pleasure in gazing upon her child, than the dress in which it is presented to her.

"You prefer an Englishman!" observed Grace, archly.

"To be sure I do! But—I declare, there is that very elegant person, I saw once at—" then suddenly recollecting herself, she made a full stop.

"Well, Lucy, who or what is it, that so astonishes you?"

"Some person, I fancied I had seen before,—nothing particular!"

"Nay, then, it must be something very mysterious."

"If you are desirous to know, I will tell you. I fancied then, that I saw a very handsome and distinguished looking man, whom I once met under peculiar circumstances; and I should like to know who he is. Let us turn; he will, perhaps, come this way again."

"Then," thought Grace, "it is not as I suspected!" and, looking in Lucy's face, she asked—"what, Lucy, as handsome, and as agreeable as Mr. Falkland?"

"Oh, quite a different thing! I do not know this gentlemen, therefore, cannot say if he be agreeable; and, as for handsome, I said rather elegant and distinguished than handsome."

Lucy was so engaged in looking out for the stranger, that she did not perceive a gentleman first bow, then, with a look of joyful recognition stop and address her friend.

"My dear Miss Shafton," exclaimed lord Charles Fitzrook, for he it was, "this is, indeed, an unexpected pleasure! I heard you would be off for Italy, at least, a month before this, and despaired of seeing you."

"We have remained longer than we intended," replied Grace, "and I believe, still, stay another month."

"This is delightful! Allow me the pleasure,"—offering an arm to each lady. Grace immediately introduced Miss Maitland. Lord Charles continued—"I cannot tell you how charmed I am to find you here, (and he really looked so) my sister will be so happy to see

you. By the by, she is now married: she is lady Stuart, and is here, entre nous, to spend the honey-moon."

Grace, of course, congratulated; and, saying that Mrs. Stanhope would expect them home, invited him to accompany them.

He was a favourite with Mrs. Stanhope, and was received accordingly. Although he heard that the carriage was at the door, he remained, and remained, and, not until Mrs. Stanhope invited him to return to dinner, did he make an attempt at departure.

"Now, that is truly kind of you; I began to fear that you did not intend to ask me, and, let me tell you, it is now a charity; for being third party in a honey-moon is not, to say truth, at all entertaining."

"Well, we shall be most happy to relieve you from so dreadful a position."

"Thank you, and now let me hand you to the carriage, for I fear I have paid you an unconscionable visit."

"Unconscionable, indeed!" observed Lucy, as they were at last seated, and progressing through the Champs Elysees, "I thought we should have lost our drive altogether. But, what a gay scene it is! I think Hyde Park, which I have heard so much about, can scarcely be gayer."

"I do not think it so *gay*," answered Mrs. Stanhope, "The equipages in Hyde Park are, in the height of the season, more numerous, and more elegant, but the pedestrians, are neither so well dressed, nor of so good a class; and, to my mind, there is something peculiarly animating in watching the knots of laughing faces, that are seated in groups under the trees.

"Look, what an elegant party of equestrians!" cried Lucy, "That extremely handsome woman, attended by two cavaliers; and—yes—that is the very gentleman that——but what is the matter dear Grace? you are ill!"

Grace had sunk back in the carriage, looking extremely pale.

"We will return!" said Mrs. Stanhope.

"By no means, dear Madam! it was but a sudden faintness, I shall be better: I am better."

At this moment the party, that Lucy had remarked, were passing close by the carriage; one of the gentlemen bowed to Mrs. Stanhope, and she returned his salute with an appearance of surprise and pleasure.

Grace had looked another way.

"Who is that gentleman, dear Mrs. Stanhope?" asked Lucy eagerly.

"It is lord de Courcy. I am quite delighted to see him here."

They were now greeted by lord Charles, who, riding up to the carriage, said, "My sister is charmed to hear you are in Paris, and she has deputed me to entreat you will join her quiet soirée. I shall be with you at dinner, and will escort you. Come, you must not refuse the bride; she has, already, left cards for you."

Mrs. Stanhope looked at Grace.

"Nay, I dare not take an excuse. Miss

Shafton, Mrs. Stanhope looks at you, as though you were to be arbitress; I assure you it is not to be a party: you will not, I hope, deny us the pleasure?"

"Indeed, I am not arbitress! But if Mrs. Stanhope says yes, I shall be happy to accompany her, if I feel well enough, and provided it be, as you say, not a party."

"Upon my honour, there is not an invited guest. But, in Paris, the number of one's evening visitors is always uncertain, because it is a privileged time for visiting, and it is Georgy's "*at home*" night."

"By the by," asked Mrs. Stanhope, "do you know that de Courcy is here? I have just seen him."

"Oh, yes, but how dreadfully ill he is looking—quite an altered man! you are very likely to see him to night; but I am detaining you! *au plaisir*." and away galloped lord Charles, full of love and fresh hopes.

Likely to see him, and Grace had half con-

sented to go; but it was only a *half* consent, and she might still withdraw it—yet, why should she avoid him? she had another month to stay, and *must* meet him some time or other. He knew Mrs. Stanhope, and politeness would oblige him to call,—then came her dear father's wishes to her remembrance; he would have had her meet him, and meet him with indifference—proudly. Had she strength to do so?—yes, she would task her courage, she would not fly him! and, with this determination, she felt satisfied; she was following the advice of her dear, her departed friend and parent.

Lord Charles exerted all his powers to play the agreeable. 'I have it all to myself,' thought he, 'and I must carry the siege now or never! I'm glad that fellow Falkland is out of the way!' Then aloud, he asked, "What has become of Falkland, I have not seen him for an age?"

Grace, involuntarily, turned her eyes towards Lucy, but Lucy was so busy searching for the

motto of some *bon bons*, that she did not appear to heed the question; but Grace thought there was a deeper colour on her cheek.

"I think, he is likely to be here." answered Mrs. Stanhope. "He told me it was probable."

"Well," thought lord Charles, "I don't feel much afraid of him, but he's so cursedly in the way."

When the ladies retired in order to give a glance in their mirrors, and an extra finishing touch to their curls.

"Do you think, Grace," asked Lucy, "that Mr. Falkland will come?"

"Indeed I have scarcely thought about it."

"How cold and indifferent you are!" said Lucy almost pettishly.

"I am sorry you think so Lucy."

"Oh, I did not mean that!" exclaimed Lucy, throwing her arms round Grace, and kissing her affectionately; "I only meant that Mr. Falkland takes such a kind interest in you, that—"

"I highly esteem Falkland dear Lucy, but his presence is, certainly, to me a matter of indifference. I shall be glad to see him if he come—"

"But you don't care whether he does come or not. Well, I certainly think him very superior to lord Charles!"

"And so do I."

"Poor Lucy!" thought Grace, as she stepped into the carriage, "it is as I feared, she is attached to Falkland, and it is partly my fault, for having thrown them so much together. Well, I must try and remedy the evil—he deserves her, and she would make him happy."

They were soon at the Place Vendôme, and were received, by the bride, with becoming languor and elegance. To Grace she was lavish of her caresses, and insisted upon placing her near herself.

The salon was superb. There were many guests, but it had not the air of an English party. There was no appearance of ceremony,

no effort to entertain, yet all appeared amused, and conversation flowed on without restraint.

There is one decided difference between French and English society; in the former, people appear to meet for the object of mutual entertainment; they *converse*, they *listen*, and, though there may be some display in their desire of imparting their knowledge, it leads to a very general cultivation of intellect. There is no whispering, for each speaker chooses a subject that he thinks of sufficient importance to interest the whole company. In the latter, on the contrary, there must be some decided amusement provided—either dancing, or music, or a—lion! yet for what? not that people particularly desire to dance; still less, to listen to music; but because, while these amusements are creating a noise and bustle, they may have the opportunity of—conversing? no,—of talking, *flirting*, and *quizzing*. How often does it occur that, after an awkward silence, or a constrained attempt at conversation, the moment

one of the company agrees to sing, or to play, there is an immediate buzz; every one finds something to whisper to his, or her, immediate neighbour. No matter whether the person, who has kindly yielded to the request of the hostess, performs well or ill; it is all the same, and the general hum of voices, which, before, would have appeared natural—as a proof that the assembled company were amused—becomes ill-bred and ugly, from the rudeness expressed towards an individual, who, though without success, has endeavoured to entertain. In France, this is never the case; if people assemble to dance, they really enjoy it, and do it so well, that a spectator may derive pleasure from witnessing their exertions. If any sing, the whole company are silent, and eager to applaud. Each is ready to contribute a share towards the general amusement, and no one waits for a noise to begin chattering. Let English people bear in mind, that so strange a habit, as this last, is apt to give rise to the supposition,

that they have nothing to say either fit or worthy the attention of an assembly. We, who believe our countrywomen to be quite as *spirituelle*, and quite as well informed as their *Parisien* contemporaries, would wish to see them quite as amiable and quite as agreeable in society*.

At Lady Stuart's, every one appeared amused, although there was no decided entertainment provided. One group was listening to a member of the Chambers, who very ably discussed the politics of the day. Another, to a literary argument on the respective merits of de la Martine and Victor Hugo. All the women were literary, all politicians, and all took a lively interest in the subjects discussed; consequently, they did not turn languidly away as if they neither understood, nor wished to take part in the conversation. Not that we would advocate the cause of female politicians, but,

* This wish has nothing to do with domestic habit—there, we hope all imitation to end.

we think the subject should be sufficiently understood by women, to enable them to interest themselves in so general a topic of conversation.

Fresh guests were continually announced, and, at every fresh announcement, Grace felt her heart beat with a sickly expectation; still de Courcy came not, and she began to hope that her feelings would not be put to the expected trial.

Lord Charles, in pursuance of his plan, monopolized, and, if truth be told, rather tired her; for, though his conversation was generally considered animated and agreeable, it failed either to amuse, or interest Grace. It may be doubted, whether, in her present state of mind, any thing would have had that effect.

"What a weak creature I am!" she inwardly exclaimed; and, vexed at her restless agitation, she endeavoured to divert the current of her ideas, by listening to a literary discussion on the *écoles romantique, et classique.*

At this moment, a lady entered the room, who was announced as Mme. la Marquise de Froulay, and Grace immediately recognised her as the lady, in whose company she had seen de Courcy.

"Where is the Marquis?" asked lady Stuart, as she arose to receive Mme. de Froulay, "shall we not see him?"

"I cannot answer for him!" replied the lady, "he has some engagement with lord de Courcy, but, most likely, they will have the gallantry to come and attend me home."

Her voice was remarkably sweet and clear, and Grace lost not a word. Lord Charles had arisen to pay his homage, and conduct the new guest to a seat. On returning to Grace, he enquired what she thought of Mme. la Marquise.

"Very interesting," answered Grace, "extremely so; but I should not have taken her for a French-woman."

"Ah, I see you are a good judge of physiog-

nomy! She is not a Frenchwoman,—she is an Italian, and has been married to de Froulay for some years. I cannot think that, on her part, it was a marriage of inclination; but, indeed, a marriage of inclination is a rare thing on the continent. De Courcy appears to be her constant attendant, and, as he is so general a favourite with the ladies, no doubt she tries to console herself for her indifference to her husband."

Grace did not reply, she detested scandal, and, in this instance, it was doubly disgusting to her. She found herself unconsciously observing the fair Italian,—unconsciously interested in her. Hers was not, to Grace's judgment, a countenance to be coupled with the idea of guilt, or even coquetry. The large liquid eye, it is true, bespoke passion, but it was tempered with an expression of such deep pensiveness, almost resignation, that an observer would have pronounced her chastened by suffering. The lip, slightly curved, showed a propensity to satire, and there was something

in her whole manner, which, without being haughty, intimated a conscious superiority to the crowd which surrounded her.

She was, almost instantly, besieged by a troop of admirers; but her look of cold indifference, and her slightly satirical replies, kept all in some degree of awe. She was entreated to sing, and a guitar was laid at her feet, with the utmost grace, by a little french Count, who declared it would be a favour worth purchasing with a year's penance.

Mme. de Froulay took the guitar, and smilingly asked the opinion of the company as to the penance to be enjoined; for, she continued in the sweetest accents, "I, always, think it desirable to punish adulation."

This called forth the wit of half the company, and, during the time that all the smart things were saying at the Count's expense, which, to do him justice, he bore with the utmost good humour, the lady tuned her instrument, and looking round with a glance that claimed atten-

tion, without seeming desirous of eliciting applause, she sang, in full melodious voice, a beautiful little venitian canzonetta, which she executed, with the peculiar grace of her country.

During the performance, two gentlemen entered the room; one of them Grace *felt* to be de Courcy—we say she *felt* it was de Courcy, because she did not allow her eye to glance towards him. In an instant, she was in possession of that calm, which she had in vain struggled for during the whole of the evening; so true is it, that suspense is much more agitating than reality, and that the necessity of exertion brings with it the power that is necessary.

The song, being finished, called forth the plaudits it deserved; and de Courcy, and the Marquis, came forward to pay their compliments to lady Stuart. Grace was then aware that de Courcy approached to address Mrs. Stanhope, who was seated near herself. She turned her head; she tried not to hear what they said; but, every tone of de Courcy's voice

rang in her ear, and, whilst she was, in appearance, listening to lord Charles, she lost not a word of their conversation.

After they had been conversing for some little time, Mrs. Stanhope said, "I am really delighted to see you! you must come to us often; and I am impatient to introduce you to—would I could say, my daughters! for they are fully as dear to me,—one especially," she added in a lower tone; then, aloud, "Grace, my love, let me introduce you to an old friend of mine, lord de Courcy."

De Courcy bowed, and, as he turned towards Grace, his eyes fixed full upon her, said, "I have already the pleasure of knowing Miss Shafton: I am happy to see her looking so well."

Grace bowed, but with a cold and distant hauteur, very unlike her usual manner.

"Why Grace," exclaimed Mrs. Stanhope, in some surprise, "you never told me that you knew lord de Courcy!"

De Courcy hastened to relieve her embarrassment. "I spent so brief a period at de Courcy Hall, that I ought not perhaps to have hoped Miss Shafton would have remembered me; *she* is not, however, so easily forgotten, her benevolent attention, not only to her own tenantry but to mine, renders my residence there almost useless."

This speech would have appeared mockery to Grace, had it not been for the deep melancholy tones of his voice. She felt that his eyes were fixed upon her; she also felt that she must say something in reply, and with an effort, she raised her eyes. For an instant, they met those of de Courcy, whose intense expression took from her the power of utterance, and it was in a low and hesitating voice that she replied.

"Your lordship does yourself an injustice; your absence is a cause of sincere regret—to—to all your"—

At this moment, Lucy approached, and

Grace blessed the interruption, for she felt unable to proceed.

Again the ceremony of introduction took place, and there was an arch smile on Lucy's countenance, when Mrs. Stanhope introduced de Courcy as an old friend, which he, with difficulty, withstood.

"Grace," exclaimed she, "you must come and look at an exquisite picture in the next room, it is the most beautiful thing I have ever seen."

Grace willingly arose, and lord Charles offered his arm to conduct her. Of course, de Courcy was obliged to escort Lucy.

There were many attracted to the spot, to behold this *chef d'œuvre*. It was, indeed, a lovely specimen, done by the pencil of the inimitable Scheffer. Lord Stuart, who prided himself upon being a connoisseur, had lately purchased it, and it did true honour to hi taste. The subject was, simply, a peasant girl; but the face was of that exquisite order, that, once looked upon, is never forgotten.

"I would give much for that picture," exclaimed lord Charles, "Will you part with it, Stuart?"

"No, no, I had trouble enough to get it. What do you think of it, de Courcy?"

"Exquisite!"

"Do you see no likeness to any one present?" asked Lucy of him, as he stood gazing upon the picture.

"Yes!" he replied, looking towards Grace, "It wants but the costume, to render it a portrait."

This was said in so low a tone, that it would have escaped Grace's ear, even had it not been overpowered by the exclamations of lord Charles, who was energetically declaring, that, henceforth, this should be the shrine at which he would worship. "That is," he added in a low tone, "when I cannot have the happiness of being present with the fair original."

This speech was so evidently lost upon Grace, who had been occupied in admiring the

skill of the artist, that he was obliged to say: "Do you not see the likeness, Miss Shafton?"

"Likeness to whom?"

"Look yonder," he said, turning her towards the immense glass opposite.

Grace blushed, "If you mean that it resembles me, I cannot say that I perceive it."

"We are bad judges of what resembles ourselves!" replied lord Charles, "besides, you have not studied the image, as I have done."

This was said in a low and earnest tone of voice, accompanied by a slight pressure of the arm, which rested upon his.

"I think," said Grace, coldly, "we are about to have another song, and I must not lose it! We will, if you please, return."

Grace was right; *la bella Italiana* was again preparing to indulge the company.

De Courcy, however, moved not; he remained wrapt in contemplation of the image depicted on the canvass, and Lucy was obliged to remind him that Mme. de Froulay was going to sing.

He started, and, as he conducted her towards a seat, he said, "Miss Maitland has not, I think, forgotten, that I had the boldness to address her once, upon a melancholy occasion."

"Oh, no, I remembered you immediately!"

"Miss Shafton is looking ill, yet, better than I anticipated."

"She is, thank God! now beginning to look better. At one time we feared greatly for her, and the physician said nothing could save her but change of climate, and change of scene. But, you must not judge of her to night, there is a false glow upon her cheek, produced, no doubt, by the excitement of a first effort to appear in society."

The room was now so hushed, that the conversation dropped, but de Courcy kept his station by Lucy's chair.

The song was sung, the applause given, and de Courcy was thinking how he could best renew the conversation, when Lucy, turning to him, said, "See, was I not right, when I told

you that the glow on her cheek was false?"

Grace was pale as marble.

"She has not been much in society yet?"

"Not at all! and is here this evening only because Mrs. Stanhope and myself positively refuse to go out without her; and lord Charles declared it was not a party."

"It is not considered so!" remarked de Courcy, smiling, as he looked round the crowded apartment.

"I am glad to see he can smile," thought Lucy, "though it is in rather a melancholy fashion."

There was another question that de Courcy longed to ask; yet, how to ask it? He paused—hesitated—then, with a determined effort, "I suppose—no doubt you—expect Mr. Falkland soon."

Poor Lucy was taken by surprise; she felt the blood rush to her cheeks, and, absorbed by her own confusion, never noticed the strangeness of the question. She turned away her

head, then, remembering that de Courcy waited an answer, replied—" I do not know—yes—I rather think Mrs. Stanhope expects him."

De Courcy changed the subject, and, soon after, crossed the room, and took a seat by Mme. de Froulay.

The idea of Falkland's being in love with Grace, had never once entered Lucy's head; she, therefore, could not have imagined any one else to be possessed with it. Perhaps, she would not have been so shortsighted, had it not been for her suspicion that Grace was otherwise attached: and of her perfect indifference to Falkland she could not doubt. She did not, therefore, dream that the man, for whom she nourished a secret passion, was himself suffering from his attachment to her friend.

When Grace returned to her seat, her courage almost forsook her, and the paleness of her cheek, which had been remarked by Lucy, was indicative of that sinking of the heart which

follows any unusual excitement. Lord Charles paid his compliments unheeded: she felt that they were wearying, and tried to relieve herself from them, by talking to Mrs. Stanhope. Presently, she observed de Courcy seat himself by the side of the Marquise. She would have given worlds not to have observed them, but an unaccountable fascination continually drew her eyes in the direction. She observed the Marquise look towards herself, and, she felt that she was the subject of conversation. Shortly afterwards, de Courcy made an inclination of the head, as if in obedience to some request of the lady's, then rose and, offering her his arm, led her directly to the spot were Grace was seated.

Bowing to Grace, he said, "Mme. de Froulay is desirous of the pleasure of an introduction to Miss Shafton."

Grace immediately rose, and, with her natural frank and graceful manner, acknowledged the courtesy. The fair Italian took the seat,

of which lord Charles had so long retained undisputed possession, saying to him archly, "My lord, I dispossess you; you are quite unconscionable! besides, what have you to say for your desertion of me all the evening? I assure you, Miss Shafton, that, until this evening, he has been the first of my adorers."

"Every one must bow to the charms of Mme. de Froulay." said lord Charles.

"Ah! it is too late! go, I banish you for a whole ten minutes."

"You will not be such a tyrant?"

"Positively, yes."

Lord Charles looked at his watch, "Remember, ten minutes only!" he said, and went to console himself by the side of Lucy.

"Are you a physiognomist, Miss Shafton?" asked her fair companion.

"I am too apt to form my opinion from the countenance, if that would entitle me to class myself as one."

"Ah! but I am one really."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, I will convince you of it, by telling you that the moment I saw you, my sympathy was excited towards you. You are in society, you talk, you smile; but, like me, your heart is not in it,—like me, you despise its heartless forms."

"To say that I despise it," replied Grace, "would be rather too strong a term, but your judgment did not err, in supposing it painful to me. I am, at present, unfitted for it, from having lost a dear friend and parent."

"Pray, pardon me, for having unwittingly touched upon so painful a chord." And, changing the subject, she entered into conversation upon various topics.

Grace found her full of sentiment and feeling; but devoid of the solid reasoning, in which she herself so far excelled the generality of her sex, and which she had, no doubt, derived from her constant companionship with a man of such high intellectual powers as her father.

"Do you remain much longer in Paris?" asked the Marquise.

"About a month, I believe; we then, proceed to Italy."

"Ah! my dear country!"

"Yes, I expect to be greatly delighted by my visit to it."

"You will, I am sure. I may, perhaps, meet you there; in which case, I shall endeavour to make it as agreeable to you as possible."

"You are thinking of going there then?"

"*We must do so this summer.*"

This was said in a tone so sad, so different from the one in which she had mentioned her country, that Grace observed—

"You, perhaps, prefer Paris?"

"Oh, no!" replied the Marquise,—then, after a slight pause—"May I hope, Miss Shafton, that, during the remainder of your stay here, I shall have the pleasure of seeing much of you. I must tell you, that I have a

darling boy, to whom I will, with your permission, introduce you. He is, of course, a great *pet*, but I try not to spoil him."

Grace expressed the pleasure she should have in availing herself of Mme. de Froulay's polite invitation; and observing that Mrs. Stanhope had risen to take leave, she made her adieus to the fair Italian, who, with great grace and sweetness, observed as she bade her good night—

"Mind, I shall keep you to your word! I do not intend to take your kind permission as mere compliment."

Upon joining Mrs. Stanhope, Grace found that a party was in agitation, for the next day, to visit Versailles. Lord Charles, upon finding that they had not yet visited it, had eagerly proposed they should all make one party. Mrs. Stanhope appealed to Grace, who, weary and anxious to be gone, begged that it might be settled in the way most agreeable to all. Mrs. Stanhope, seeing that she looked quite

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pale and fatigued, soon agreed to the proposed arrangements; and Grace, to her infinite relief, once more found herself at home.

"Well, Grace," asked Lucy, as she bade her good night, "what do you think of lord de Courcy?"

"Do not ask me what I think of any one to night, for I am weary to death."

"Poor child, then I will not tease." and, kissing her affectionately, she left her to repose.

CHAPTER IX.

On entering the breakfast room the following morning, Lucy observed that Mrs. Stanhope was occupied in reading a letter.

"Ah!" she exclaimed, "a letter from Falkland at last?"

"Are you quite sure of that Lucy," asked Grace smiling archly. "Does it follow that, because Mrs. Stanhope has received a letter, it must be from Falkland?"

"No, certainly, but I think it is. It looks like his letters: is it not dear Mrs. Stanhope?"

"Yes, and he says he shall be here in a few days."

"Right, right, I knew I was right!" cried Lucy, her face beaming with pleasure.

"My dear Grace," remarked Mrs. Stanhope, "you do not look well to day."

"I do not feel quite well; dear Madam it is the effect of raking."

"Why, we got home early, and the party was quiet"—

"And lord Charles most attentive." remarked Lucy.

"Much too attentive," replied Grace, "I was quite thanful to Mme. de Froulay for relieving me."

"Then lord Charles is not to be the man," persisted Lucy, "what say you to lord de Courcy, Grace?"

Grace grew a shade paler, "Lord de Courcy has never *bored* me with his attentions; when he does, I may be likely to say the same thing."

"Ah! but he is not the man likely to bore any one with his attentions."

"You have soon formed your opinion."

"Why, a glance is sufficient to tell you that he is a proud man—too proud to force his attentions, unless he were quite sure they would be agreeable."

"You are quite right, Lucy, and have read his character well!" observed Mrs. Stanhope, "But he is so courted by the women, that he is not likely to have much difficulty on that head."

"Except with Grace," remarked Lucy, slyly, "who means to remain an old maid all her life."

"I do indeed, Lucy, but will not condemn you to the same fate: so, we will now look out for you."

"No, no, I will look out for myself!" and she ran out of the room.

There was a short silence interrupted by Grace's remarking—

"Falkland has made his visit to Paris very late: I hope he does not think of visiting Italy also?"

"Why, Grace, you are, positively, endowed with the power of second sight. He actually hints as much in his letter. But why do you regret such a resolution on his part?"

"I would have mentioned it long ago, but that I did not consider it my own secret."

"If you allude to Falkland's attachment to yourself, Grace, I have long known it—have known, also, that you rejected his suit."

"Well then, dear Madam, you can no longer be surprised that I should fear he still nourishes hopes, which it will never be in my power to fulfil."

"If you ask me to be candid, I think he does—he is deeply attached to you."

"I can never change my sentiments: I can never think of Falkland in any other light than that of a friend. I have told him so—he must believe me!"

This was said in a voice, the firmness of which, left no doubt on Mrs. Stanhope's mind, of the sincerity of the speaker; and she sighed as she thought of Falkland.

"I have," continued Grace, "still another reason for wishing that, until he can conquer those feelings for me, he should abstain altogether from our society."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, my dear friend, where is your penetration, not to have seen the mischief that his presence, on so intimate a footing, has occasioned? Lucy loves him! I have well observed her; she loves him with the deep feeling of a first passion. Lucy, so suited to him, so calculated to make him happy—dear Mrs. Stanhope, what is to be done? I shall be the occasion of misery to two amiable and happy beings."

"My dear Grace, you really surprise me; but, now that you mention it, I do think you are right; I ought to have warned Lucy of his love for you."

"That is now too late! you must not breathe such a thing to her; we must try and promote her happiness. Will you assist me?"

"I will do any thing you suggest; but while his whole heart is devoted to you, I see little chance of success."

"It must be my care to deprive him of all hope, and then, perhaps, he will transfer his affections to Lucy: if we see no hope of that, we must prevent his visits altogether."

"Certainly, my dear Grace! Well, I shall leave it in your hands; give me only my directions."

"In the first place, do not let Lucy imagine that we have penetrated her secret."

"Of course not."

"Then, when he comes, we must decide upon the best plan."

"Well, my dear Grace, I am glad you have consulted me. Yes, we must see what can be done; and, now, it is time to go and dress; the carriage will be here immediately."

"But do, my dear Madam, try and relieve me from the very persevering attention of lord Charles: it is not agreeable; and, besides, will cause remarks."

"I will try, love, since you do not approve of it; but you are a strange girl Grace; no one seems to make any impression on you!"

"Nor ever will, my dear friend."

"Fie, I should be sorry to think so!"

The day was lovely, and lady Stuart was tolerably punctual. The Marquis de Froulay accompanied them—de Courcy having undertaken to drive the Marquise. Lord Charles took his seat in Mrs. Stanhope's carriage, and Grace would willingly have taken hers in lady Stuart's, but this was not allowed; and thus the party proceeded.

Grace enjoyed the drive: she could play the listener, and, at the same time, indulge her own reflections.

Upon their arrival at the magnificent palace, Grace was much struck by its appearance:

it fully realized the expectations she had formed of this favourite residence of Louis XIV.

As they left the carriage, she cast an imploring look at Mrs. Stanhope, to remind her of her promise, but it was no easy undertaking to baffle lord Charles. He was about to appropriate Grace to himself, when Mme. de Froulay approached to greet her, and to introduce her, as she laughingly said, to a new beau, her *caro* Ugolino. He was a lovely child, about five years of age, with the large black eyes, and beautifully arched eyebrows of his mother, and a profusion of silken hair, which had been arranged to the greatest possible advantage.

Grace, really fond of children, looked admiringly upon him. She was rapidly making friends with him, when a voice, the tones of which were not pleasing to her ears, said "Why, Teresa, why am I not to have the honour of an introduction to Mdlle. Shafton? I shall, I promise you, make a more efficient beau than Ugolino." M. de Froulay was, of

course, introduced, and without further ceremony, offering his arm to Grace, he said, "I shall have the honour of showing you every thing most worthy of your admiration." then, turning to lord Charles, he observed maliciously, "It is but fair that a Frenchman should do the honours of his own country!" and triumphantly walked off with his prize.

Lord Charles, though much chagrined, was too polite to evidence it, "Allons, de Courcy," he said, "I have but two arms." De Courcy offered his to Mrs. Stanhope, and lord Charles was honoured with Mme. de Froulay, and Lucy. The little Ugo insisted upon walking with de Courcy, 'who,' he said, 'was to let him drive the horses back, all by himself.'

Lady Stuart looked vexed at her brother's disappointment, and, with her lord, followed close upon the heels of de Froulay.

Grace was not well pleased by the familiarity of her companion, and the bold stare, with which he attempted to show his admiration,

was most offensive to her. She felt relieved by lady Stuart's approach, and, notwithstanding her companion's endeavour to press forward, insisted upon waiting until they joined them.

They were all much disappointed, except, of course, M. de Froulay, in the pictures, which, for the most part, are wretched daubs. As Ugo remarked, they are, certainly, *great* enough; but, to a bad picture, that is scarcely a recommendation.

After passing through the various suites of apartments, the party adjourned to the grounds, in which are some fine specimens of sculpture. These they traversed, and, having seen all that was to be seen, poor Grace, heartily tired of her companion, learned with pleasure, that they were returning to the carriages.

In their way back, they passed one of the fountains, the basin of which forms a tolerably large sheet of water. The little Ugo, breaking from de Courcy, ran forward, to see if there were any golden fish in it. Mme. de Froulay

called to him to stop, but the fear of being pursued, and prevented from attaining his object, gave wings to his little feet. He ran with encreased speed, and, not being aware of the slope he had to encounter, his foot slipped, and he fell in.

The mother's shriek was echoed by that of Grace, who, leaving the Marquis, ran towards the spot, and, in her anxiety for the boy, seemed about to plunge in after him. Her steps were, however, forcibly arrested, "Hold, dear Grace," said the voice of de Courcy, "fear nothing: he is safe!" and, instantly springing in, he soon succeeded in rescuing the child.

Grace stood with her hands clasped, her eyes fixed, and, not until she saw de Courcy safely land with the boy in his arms, did she sink upon a seat almost fainting.

De Courcy placed the boy in the arms of his agonized mother, who pressed him in her arms, and wept over him a passion of tears.

"Come, Teresa," exclaimed de Froulay, in

an angry and impatient tone, "you had better, instead of wetting your own clothes, let us see and procure some means of drying Ugo's. I told you, it was, always, folly to bring children out with you."

When de Courcy had resigned Ugo, he turned to look for Grace; he saw that she could scarcely support herself; that she was pale and nearly fainting, and, in a moment, he was by her side. When there, however, he seemed at a loss, how to address her, and could only hope she had not been much alarmed.

"Think not of me, my lord," said Grace hurriedly, "but hasten, for heaven's sake, and divest yourself of your wet clothing."

He was about to reply, when the Marquis de Froulay, hastily joined them, exclaiming, "My good fellow, de Courcy, *etes vous fou?* standing thus in your wet clothes!" and, seizing his arm, he dragged him away. De Courcy tried to meet Grace's eyes; he would have thanked her by a look; but, vexed at the solici-

tude she had already displayed, she did not again raise them.

At this moment, lord Charles, who had escaped from the rest of the party, eagerly joined Grace.

Come, my dear Miss Shafton, this accident has quite alarmed you, but we are going to adjourn to the neighbouring Restaurant, where you can take some refreshment." and he again, had the satisfaction of feeling Grace under his own protection.

The delay occasioned by this untoward event, and the necessity of waiting until the clothes of both the child and de Courcy were dry, detained them so long, that the Marquis proposed they should dine there. This was agreed to; the accommodation was not splendid, but it was the best course to be pursued. Ugo was put to bed, and de Courcy soon managed to make his re-appearance.

The Marquis was unamiable to his wife; dilated upon the extreme folly of bringing children

into such a party—'it was sure to spoil every one's enjoyment.'

"Well," remarked de Courcy, "I fear that the blame of the proceeding must attach to me, for it was, certainly, my fault; I begged that he might accompany us. You know we are great friends."

Mme. de Froulay looked at him—the look said more than words.

"He seems much interested for her." thought Grace, as she observed his efforts to screen Mme. de Froulay from her husband's ill-temper.

The bride was, evidently, much chagrined; she was engaged to an elegant *bal pare*, and her toilette would require no small time.

"Why cannot you go at once?" asked Mrs. Stanhope, "We have no engagement, and are just as well here. If you take lord Charles, we can wait for Mme. de Froulay."

"I thank you," replied lord Charles, "I have no desire to go, and will drive de Courcy home."

De Froulay was not sorry to get away; he was immensely tired of the party altogether, and gladly returned, with lord and lady Stuart. The latter made a thousand apologies to her dear friend Mme. de Froulay, for leaving her, "but since," she added, "I can really be of no service—"

"None in the world, my dear friend, so, pray, do not wait a moment longer on my account."

And away she hurried, glad to get rid of the *ennui* of a fatigued and over-lengthened party of pleasure.

Grace, glad to avoid the pointed attentions of lord Charles, retired with Mme. de Froulay, to watch over the boy, who was, apparently, none the worse for his immersion. She thought that the eyes of de Courcy followed her, and that there was a restlessness in his manner. He seemed anxious to address her, but no opportunity occurred.

At last, they were ready to depart.

"Come," said lord Charles, "I really think it is not fair to be quite deprived of the company of the ladies; let me have the honour of driving one of them; and de Courcy, after all his fatigues, can lounge in the carriage." Without waiting for a reply, he turned to Grace—"Miss Shafton, will you take compassion on me?"

"I must put my veto on that!" replied Mrs. Stanhope, "The phaeton will be too cold for Grace; but, if you will feel any pleasure in driving me," she added, with a sly look, "I shall be very happy to give my seat to lord de Courcy."

Lord Charles saw that he had no chance of Grace, and, being anxious to keep on the best terms with Mrs. Stanhope, eagerly accepted her proposal. "I shall take the very greatest care of you!" he exclaimed, and he led her off, as if in great triumph.

The evening was far advanced, but a brilliant moon illuminated the scene. De Courcy was

seated opposite to Grace, and next to Lucy, and the boy lay extended upon the knees of Grace and Mme. de Froulay.

Grace carefully wrapped her shawl around him, and the fond mother, whilst securing his little feet from the cold, thanked her with a tear and a smile.

"Ah, Miss Shafton," she said, "I cannot better express my gratitude for your kindness, than by wishing that you may, one day, be blessed with a *caro fanciullino*, like this."

Grace did not reply; she bent her head over the child.

"It is of no use your wishing that, Mme. de Froulay, for Grace has determined upon being a nun."

De Courcy started, he breathlessly awaited some reply from Grace, but she was still silent.

"A nun!" cried Mme. de Froulay, "oh, pray, Miss Shafton change that determination, if indeed you have formed it. They would

have made me a nun."—and she shuddered.

"Lucy was joking!" answered Grace, "our religion, does not allow of nuns."

"What! no one devotes themselves entirely to their religion?"

"Yes, I hope, and believe, that many do so, but it is not considered necessary, in so doing, to shut yourself entirely from the world. My dear father," she added, in a voice which trembled with emotion, "thought a person much more useful in fulfilling the active duties."

"And he was quite right;" observed de Courcy, "as his own excellent example proved."

Grace raised her eyes to thank him, her face was pale as the moon-beam, and de Courcy thought she looked like a being of a better world.

"Yours is a happy country, Miss Shafton," remarked the Marquise. De Courcy tells me, that young girls are free to choose for themselves, and are not taken from a convent to

marry a person whom they have never seen, and whom, perhaps, they can never love." The deep sigh that accompanied these words, showed that the speaker felt them.

"Horrible!" exclaimed Lucy, "I should, certainly, rebel against such injustice."

"And finish your days in a convent; for that is the only alternative?"

"A miserable one, truly." replied Lucy. "I begin to think better of my own country."

"There you have no unhappy marriages, then?" asked the Marquise.

"Many," answered de Courcy, "particularly in the higher circles, where marriage has become a kind of traffic, and where every thing is sacrificed to ambition."

"Well," remarked Lucy, "in my opinion, the humblest abode would be preferable with the man I loved."

"A sentiment not very common in the fashionable world, Miss Maitland. I should judge you a novice."

"You would judge quite correctly then."

De Courcy was desirous of again hearing Grace's voice, but she did not join in the conversation. There was a short silence, when, upon passing the manufactory of the beautiful Sèvres China, which is seen from the road, and which was now conspicuous in the moonlight, Lucy cried out—

"We must come and see this also, Grace, but we ought to wait for Mr. Falkland: we shall have seen all the lions before he arrives."

De Courcy threw himself back in the carriage, and, when next he spoke, it was in a cold and altered tone. There was, however, little more said, during the remainder of the drive, and they soon arrived at the Rue Castiglione. The Marquise declined descending on account of Ugo, and de Courcy accompanied her to her hôtel in the Chaussé d'Antin.

With a heart torn by contending emotions, de Courcy arrived at his own apartments. "I cannot bear this!" he exclaimed, "I cannot

constantly be in her presence, look upon and adore her, and, yet, know that she is the affianced of another! No, I will away, fly her, avoid her! Could she ever have loved me. If so, why so soon give her heart to another! But she has not given her *heart*—no, I will not believe it! for, once, yes once, she looked upon me, like my own dear Grace. But then, as if quickly repenting, she turned from me and avoided my glance. Oh, Grace, why have you given your hand to another, if your heart be still mine? But I delude myself, I forget how coldly, how haughtily she treats me, she knows too of my misery, she knows I was a prey to fraud and lies, and, yet, she turns from me as though I were unworthy. Still there is a charm about her; her very presence holds and fascinates me, my eye watches her every motion; my ear catches her slightest accent!" He arose and paced the room with hasty strides; again sat down, took a book and allowed his eye to wander vacantly over its pages. At this mo-

ment the door was gently opened, and Larry's head was seen peeping in.

"What is it, Larry? come in."

"Oh, my lord, I'm sorry to tell your lordship that poor François is very bad intirely, all's one as if he wanted the extrame unction. An' he brathes like a pair o' bellows with a slit in 'em, poor crathur! an' his eyes are rollin' an' rollin, jist like two broad banes in a white chany plate. An' he's mightily uncontinted in his conscience, an' goes on-howling horrible for your lordship. An' my lord, it would be a charity to come to him, jist to ase his mind against meeting the parliment o' paradise."

"What said the doctor, when he saw him last?"

"He tould us to make him as comfortable as we could, for the few hours he had to raspirate; an' to give him any thing he asked for. An' sure I've offered him thing afther thing, to thry and timpt him, an' to get him away from thinkin'—but nothin' plased him, till I

asked him if I should bring your lordship to visit him a minit—an' thin, only to see how his poor bit of a worn out face bamed with agerness, an' his eyes fixed themselves on me so maning an' implorin', that I got up at onct to come for your lordship! An' I heard him mutther 'God above, God above!' as I passed the feet o' the bed, an' I said 'is there nothin' else François?' an' he said 'nothin', nothin', I'm livin' for that, I'm livin' for that!' Oh, my lord, you should have seen his face thin, it was the picthur of impatience an' anxiety; an' I think it's the spirit that's stirring to get out of his body, which takes effect a thrifle before the death."

"I will go to him at once," cried de Courcy. "Go before, and tell him I am coming."

When he entered the chamber, a gleam of satisfaction lit up the dying man's face—"Ah," he exclaimed, "this is like yourself my lord! I thought you would come and see me; but I do not deserve your kindness—I am quite unworthy of it!"

"You have ever been a good and faithful servant, François! I have nothing to reproach you with; on the contrary—"

François groaned aloud, and signed for those present to withdraw; then, in a low voice, he began,—

"I have that to tell you which must be told before I die! I dare not hope for your forgiveness, but I cannot die till my conscience is disburthened."

"What can this mean, François, you are wandering?"

François shook his head. "You, my lord, say that I have been faithful, and so I was, until I fell into the snare of a woman. But, listen—you remember, perhaps, when we were last in London, having entrusted me with two letters, one for Dr. Shafton, the other for Miss Shafton?"

De Courcy started—"well?"

"Those letters never reached the hands they were intended for!"

"And what," asked de Courcy, concealing his anger and surprise, "what could have induced you thus to betray my confidence?"

"Gold and woman's tongue! When you first left de Courcy Hall for the Duchess de Rinucci's, I fell into the snare. Manette, the Duchess' waiting woman, pretended a violent passion for me, and, as she was a pretty girl, I had no objection to indulge her fancy. She questioned me much as to what your lordship was doing in the country, and, forgive me, my lord, as we all fancied that there was something between you and Miss Shafton, she soon managed to get all that I knew out of me. Shortly after, she was unusually tender; every lure was held out to make me a subservient to her wishes, or rather to those of her lady. Manette assured me that the Duchess was very wretched at the prospect of this marriage, which must, she positively knew, bring misery upon you; and persuaded me that, by aiding them to prevent it, I should be doing you a

kind service. In fine, my lord, I fell; I became their tool. A large sum of money was given me for my promise of intercepting your correspondence with Dr. or Miss Shafton; that sum to be doubled upon my bringing proof that I had done so!—"

There was a long pause.

"Then the letters?" said de Courcy.

"Were put, by me, into Manette's hands, to be given to the Duchess."

De Courcy sighed deeply.

"I knew you could not forgive me my lord! I have, since, fancied that I did more mischief, than I then thought could result from such a trifle—but—I am justly punished!" and the miserable man sank back on his pillow, in a state of exhaustion.

"François," said de Courcy, "you have, indeed, by this want of faith, caused me much misery, but I forgive you! Remember, however, that my forgiveness can avail you little it is of your God that you must ask pardon,

not only for the fraud practised upon the earthly master, who confided in you, but for your disobedience to the commands of your heavenly one. Be assured you have my forgiveness: and, now, turn your thoughts to him, who alone *can* and *will* forgive, if you are sincerely penitent."

"God bless you, God bless you, my dear lord! you will, I trust, still be happy, though I shall never see you so."

"Good night, François; try and compose yourself, and ask for any thing you desire!" Thus saying, de Courcy left the room, desiring the attendant to return to the patient, and telling Larry to see that the poor fellow was well taken care of.

"What must the doctor have thought of me!" was de Courcy's first painful reflection, on this new scene of fraud being presented to him: and "He has left this world, with a most unfavourable impression of my character!" was the next, and still more painful one. And

Grace—he no longer wondered at her haughty salutation, at her cold and indifferent demeanour—but, to her, he could still explain all, and he would lose no time in seeking an interview for that pupose.

De Courcy's first care, upon rising the next morning, was to enquire how François had passed the night.

"It's all over, my lord!" said Larry, "his mortial coorse is run! The Lord be good to him!"

"Dead?"

"Thrue for you, my lord, dead as dish wather! An' it was a cruel struggle the poor thing had of it."

"Did he die in such agony, then?"

"Thrue for you my lord, hidjus agony! that's to say, not jist complately at the last; but 'twas an awful night! I was to the fore, thank Heaven, an' I did all I could to comfort an' cheer him, aginst the 'long road that has no turning!' But he was nastily bothered in

his mind, with some dark consarn, I'm thinkin'; for he talked of havin' desaved the best an' kindest o' masthers; an', surely, it made his desase desperate ugly! An' mighty thryin' it was to be near him—callin' on God every minit, in sich a pitious vice as might draw milk out of a flint. "Oh God!" says he, "just and terrible God, I feel thy hand upon me, heavy, heavy, heavy, heavy! Mercy, mercy! I'm but a poor worm o' the earth, an' a slimy one too—a base desateful one! I confess it, oh Lord, in hope of your salvation!" An' thin, my lord, his eyes closed, an' he seemed altogether uncapable of collecting his thoughts; an' I begun prayin' airnestly an' fast, thinkin' he was about to have the rattles. But, as I was in the midst of an Ave Mary, he began agin—"Oh!" says he, "if I had sarved my God as I have sarved my vile passhins, I should not now be afflicted with these tormints! Oh! that I was a boy agin—a light-hearted boy—I'd ate the grass o' the fields,

sooner than the good things purchased by sin!" An' thin, he asked me for a dhrink, an' I gave him a little mulled wine that I had ready; an' he said, "God bless you, Larry, that's the first drop of comfort I've dhrunk this many a day!" An' I said, 'come, cheer up, you'll do yet!' An' he said, "No, Larry, it's a sartin thing with me, I'm a going fast! but my mind is asier, thank God!" an I said 'Amin!' an thin I heard him a prayin' to himself, an' I prayed too. An', sure, I fancy the Lord heard us, for a smile settled on the poor fellow's face, an' he fell into a gentle dose, which lasted half an hour—and thin, my lord, 'the time was tould and the sowl summoned,' an' he was much firmer an' happier. An', jist before the rattles took effect upon him, he said, "Good bye, Larry! God bless you, pray for me, pray for me. I'm goin' now, I am goin' now!" an' thin, my lord, the awful grip o' death took howld upon him, an' wrenched the narves o' life asunder! But I closed his eyes, an'—barrin

the furirn apparance of his countenance—he makes a very comely corpse!"

"I am glad to hear he died so calmly, poor fellow; and glad that you were such a comfort to him, Larry."

"Ah, my lord, it's an accident which calls for all our attintion and kindness to each other; for doesn't it come upon the rich and upon the poor? an' twist the strong man into the simblance of a babby of a twal' month old—robbin' him of power o' limb, an' power o' head? an', sure if we didn't tache him the last duty, an' do him the last kindness, what difference would there be betwuxt us and thim houseless vagabonds o' sparrows, who peck their sick an' lame, like a gang o' work-house set o' lights?"

As soon as the hour permitted, de Courcy proceeded to the rue Castiglione, with the determination of seeing Grace, if possible, alone. But, upon arriving there, he learned that Grace was ill, and unable to leave her room. She

had taken a severe cold, owing to the lateness of the hour on the previous evening, and her being entirely unprovided with wraps; for having folded her shawl round the sleeping boy, she remained herself exposed to the night air. Mrs. Stanhope expressed great uneasiness. "She has been," she observed, "so delicate, since her father's death, that the least thing affects her. I believe we must get away from Paris: it is too gay and bustling for her, in the present state of her health. Well, Lucy?" as the latter entered the room.

"Grace says, that she shall soon be better; but, I think, she looks very ill. She looked much worse after that stupid party, and the cold drive last night, with nothing to wrap her in, has put the finishing stroke. I cannot think how I could have been so stupid, as not to have observed that she took her shawl off."

"It was indeed negligent of us all;" remarked de Courcy, "but she is ever too regardless of self."

"Too much so, my lord!" observed Lucy, "I must, for the future, take better care of her."

De Courcy took his leave. Anxious for Grace's health, disappointed at not seeing her, he failed not to enquire every day. But she was, for some time, confined to her room, and, during this period, Falkland arrived.

When first de Courcy saw Grace, after her short illness, Falkland was present. He stayed scarcely a moment, and Grace, who had been told by Lucy of his anxious enquiries after her health, thought his manner cold and abrupt.

"How extremely altered de Courcy is!" remarked Falkland, after his departure, "he looks wretchedly ill, and I should say is ill at ease."

"I, also, have observed the change," replied Mrs. Stanhope, "and with real regret! I wonder what is the cause of his unhappiness, for unhappy I am sure he is?"

"I rather think," answered Falkland, "there has been some disagreement between him and

his sister, the Duchess. It is long since he has visited her, and, on her way to Italy this year, she has avoided Paris, although she must have known he was there."

"I never liked that woman!" exclaimed Mrs. Stanhope.

"Nor I," replied Falkland, "but de Courcy was much attached to her, and it must have been something extraordinary that could have changed him."

"And she is now in Italy?"

"Yes, but when I saw her, previous to her departure, she gave me the idea of a person not long for this world. She left England sooner than she intended, on account of her health."

"You must not venture for a drive to day, I think, Grace," said Mrs. Stanhope, as the carriage was announced.

"I shall prefer remaining at home, provided you give orders that I am not visible."

"Well then, perhaps, Falkland, you will escort Lucy and myself?"

Falkland hesitated.

"Nay, if you have any engagement."

"I have an appointment in an hour's time, therefore should be of little service to you."

"We must do without you, then."

Mrs. Stanhope saw through the manœuvre; he wished to remain with Grace, "and," thought she, "perhaps, it is as well."

Lucy had been equipping herself for the drive; when she found that Falkland was not to accompany them, Grace observed that her colour changed, but that she tried to conceal her disappointment under an encrease of vivacity. She deeply sympathised with the kind and light hearted girl, and determined, in her own mind, that she should, no longer, be exposed to this trial of feeling.

After handing them to the carriage, Falkland returned. "Shall I be in your way, for the next hour?" he asked, "I would not willingly believe that your prohibition extended to me."

"Nor did it," replied Grace, but she smiled

as she added, "for I, of course, imagined you would accompany Mrs. Stanhope, and Miss Maitland, in their drive."

"And I escaped only on that account? That is almost an unkind admission!"

Grace did not reply.

"Never mind," he continued, "I have escaped it, and will not believe you unkind. But I am sadly disappointed to find you still an invalid."

"I have been better, and am now suffering only from cold."

"The genial climate of Italy will restore you: you have remained here rather too long."

"Longer than I wished. I am looking forward with much pleasure to our visit to Italy. Shall you remain long in Paris?"

"No indeed, I shall have no attraction here after your departure. I should not have delayed my visit to Paris so long, had I not arranged to pass a few months in Italy."

Grace looked grave, and was silent.

"You do not say you shall be glad to see me there."

"I am always glad to see Mr. Falkland, I reckon him amongst my few, my very few, valued friends."

"I understand you! You fear I do not rest contented with the title of friend. Be canded with me, Miss Shafton, you do fear this?"

"I should be sorry to think that you did not."

"But, suppose I restrain my hopes and wishes to that privilege, will you deny me the happiness of being near you?"

"Falkland," said Grace, looking up and fixing on him a penetrating glance, "you have asked me to be candid,—I have ever been so! I, now, ask *you* to be candid with me. Will you say, on your word, that you look on me only in that light, and that you never wish to look upon me in any other?"

"No Grace! no, I *cannot*! on my life, I cannot say so!"

"But I never can be other to you than a friend."

"You wish to destroy every hope."

"I do not wish you to nourish false ones, such as never can be realized."

She spoke in a low, distinct, yet mournful tone. Falkland arose, walked away, then returned—he was painfully agitated. After a short silence he again addressed her—

"Grace—forgive me for so addressing you—but, I have watched you closely; have seen you the admired, the loved of many; yet, amongst the crowd that paid their homage, not one has made any impression on your heart; not one of them has been distinguished even with so great a portion of your regard as I have. And yet, you cannot love me—is it, that a heart like yours can be insensible? or, is it—but forgive me, I have no right to pry into the secret of your distaste; it is sufficient that you love me not—that you never can love me!"

Grace sat, her head leaning upon her hand,

her eyes fixed upon the ground; she was apparently, in deep thought—after a short silence, she raised her head.

"Falkland," she said, in a voice, whose low sweet tones penetrated at once to his heart, "it is true, you *have* no right to ask, yet, I will answer. I will disclose to you, and, for your sake, a secret I hoped to carry with me to the grave—my affections are not mine to give! before I saw you, they were another's!"

The paleness of her cheek, and the quivering of her lip, showed how much this confession cost her.

Falkland was greatly affected, he approached her with the tenderest respect,—he took her hand—

"Generous, noble girl," he exclaimed, "how can I thank you for this sacrifice? I am unworthy of it! But, oh, Grace, how could I for a moment suspect that there was one blessed with your love, when I saw him not near you? How could I suppose that he, who

had obtained such a treasure, could wear it with apparent indifference?"

"Tis all over, our love is at an end! but—I did love him—I can never love another! and now, I implore you, let this subject never be renewed between us. If possible, forget it,—forget that the heart you would have won is desolate and forsaken."

"One word, and I have done for ever,—your father, did he"—

"He knew all! I loved where he had placed his friendship, and that has been my sole consolation."

Falkland pressed her hand. It was passing strange—it was a mystery! but he dared ask no further.

"And now," said Grace, "we, I trust, understand each other! You will not now think of proceeding to Italy."

"Certainly not, if you forbid it: otherwise, my determination, in that respect, remains unaltered. Fear not, however, that hope will again

mislead me, I know you too well, to imagine"—

"Falkland, you must not go!"

Falkland looked puzzled. "May I not ask the reason—or is it that you still doubt me?"

Grace was silent for some moments, she then said—

"That I think you generous, I have proved, by entrusting you with my secret; a secret I thought nothing could have drawn from me; but the secret of another I have no right to betray. It is, perhaps, a mere suspicion! At all events, my own observation has, alone, enabled me to discover it."

Falkland started, his cheek flushed, he looked hurriedly at Grace, then, as hurriedly, withdrew his eyes.

"I have said too much," she continued, "you, already, understand me."

"I fear, I do! but, you may be mistaken."

"I am not mistaken! I have loved, and I know how it steals upon the heart."

"I trust—indeed, I think you are deceived."

"Fie, Falkland! you do *not*, in your heart, think so! It is true, you have hitherto been blind; but, a moment's reflection upon the past, will convince you that I am right."

Falkland was silent. Grace, after a short pause, continued—

"Yes, you have, unwittingly, won Lucy's heart, and such a heart; think, Falkland, what an ingenuous heart it is—think what a wife she would make; loving, innocent, unworldly; looking up to her husband as to her only source of happiness."

"And can you, Grace, you, who will sacrifice nothing for my happiness, can you council me to play the hypocrite, and to offer to another that heart which is yours alone?"

"That was not spoken like yourself! Would the *sacrifice* of a heart be pleasing to Falkland? would he be content with a sorrowing, wounded heart, one that has nothing to give but esteem? No, believe me, friendship is too

cold a sentiment with which to meet a husband's love; a *man* is never satisfied with it, a woman may, sometimes, mistake it for a warmer feeling. I think I am not deceived, when I say, that man's love, when utterly hopeless, soon changes its character. In a short time, your feelings for me will assume a calmer tone; your love will become friendship, then, Falkland, you will, if you remain insensible to such a love as that of my friend, have thrown away a treasure, the worth of which will, hereafter, cause you deep regret. Remember," as he was about to interrupt her, "I do not, I would not plead for her happiness, however dear it may be to me, if I thought not that your own greatly depended upon your determination. I have deeply erred in my judgment, if you are one formed to be content or happy in leading a life of solitude. Tell me then, were your love for me out of the question, that Lucy Maitland is *not* a girl calculated to make you happy, and we drop the subject, for ever?"

Falkland smiled, "You are a dear, noble, generous girl, Grace! How can you expect, that, when every circumstance shows your character in some new and advantageous light, my love is likely to grow cold. But," seeing her grave, and vexed expression of countenance, "I will be serious, and I will be candid: I think highly of Miss Maitland; I admire her, and have little doubt that, had not my heart been preoccupied by your image, her attractions and amiable disposition would have been appreciated as they deserve."

"Oh, Falkland, then you will not surely long remain insensible, now that you know all?"

"My dear, kind friend, I never will, believe me, knowingly cause unhappiness! I shall reflect on what you have said—only remarking that you, my dear Grace, (for, I will now use the privilege of friendship,) are pointing out a course to me that you would not yourself follow. However, if you are not deceived in your

idea—if Miss Maitland does really honour me with a preference—I shall make up my mind either instantly to withdraw or to—follow the advice, you find it so easy to *give*."

"Indeed, my dear Falkland, if you knew all, the case would appear somewhat different between you and me!" replied Grace, blushing. "But you would not wish to pain me by entering upon that subject? I am perfectly satisfied with your determination! I feel convinced that, with the bandage removed which has hitherto obscured your sight, you cannot fail of deciding upon, not only the most generous course, but upon the one most likely to contribute to your own happiness. And now, you must begone, or the carriage will be back, and they will wonder at our long conference. Besides," she added archly, "there's your appointment, which, I fear, has been forgotten."

Falkland did depart, but his feelings were so various and contending that he was unable to analyze them. Admiration for Grace was

mixed up with the disclosure she had made of the state of her affections—grief for her loss, with the flattering remembrance that he had unconsciously won the heart of a sweet and amiable girl—one, certainly, in every respect, calculated to make him happy. Then came surprise and indignation, that any one, blessed with the love of a creature like Grace, could have thrown such bliss from him. Then succeeded little circumstances, which pressed upon his recollection, and which tended to confirm the belief that Lucy really did love him, (a belief, we may remark, *en passant*, that a man is not apt to be very incredulous about.) Entirely occupied by his own thoughts, he walked on so heedlessly, that he had actually nearly run over de Courcy, before he recognised him.

"My dear de Courcy," he exclaimed, "pray excuse me, I was so engaged—"

"With such happy thoughts," interrupted de Courcy, in a tone which did not bespeak much sympathy with his friend's supposed hap-

piness, "that you could not be expected to observe the"—he was about to say miserable—but, checking himself, he concluded with, "the things of this earth."

"We may be deeply engaged in thoughts," answered Falkland, smiling, "and yet, not very happy ones."

"No one would credit you, Falkland, if you said that your thoughts were otherwise than happy."

"Why not?"

"Why not!—your countenance would belie you. But, any commands for Italy, I am off to-morrow?"

"To-morrow, why, this morning you did not appear to have the least intention of leaving Paris?"

"Nor had I, but, I have since learned that my sister is dangerously ill, and I hasten to see her."

"She was, indeed, looking extremely ill, when she left England."

"Will you make my compliments in the rue Castilione, and my excuses for being unable to take leave."

"Certainly."

"Farewell, Falkland, I need not wish you happy!" and de Courcy left him so abruptly, that Falkland stood for a moment surprised.

"What the deuce does he mean?" thought Falkland, as he looked after him, "I do not know why he does not think it necessary wish me happy; but he, certainly, looks as he wished me at the devil!"

Grace felt much relieved after her interview with Falkland. It had been painful, but the consciousness of having done what was right, gave a pleasing satisfaction to her heart. The hope of making both Lucy and Falkland finally happy, was a source of real gratification.

Grace was in her own room when Lucy returned; she entered it, with evident impatience and ill-humour.

"You were quite wise, Grace, to remain at

home, for we have had a most disagreeable drive."

"Indeed, what was the matter?"

"Every thing, it was cold, and windy and dusty! Then, that horrid Marquis, with his great eyes, keeping us half an hour; then, lord Charles, detaining us twice as long, and sighing, and looking daggers, because he heard you were not visible; and"—

"Oh, no more ands, dear Lucy; let us descend to dinner, and see if you will recover the dreadful horrors of the morning."

"What! eat myself into better humour? but I have no appetite!"

"Where is Falkland?" asked Mrs. Stanhope, "he said he would return to dinner."

"Perhaps he is detained!" observed Grace.

"I dare say," exclaimed Lucy, "he is better engaged, as he was this morning."

"Shall we wait?" asked Mrs. Stanhope, looking at Grace.

"Oh, my dear Madam," cried Lucy,

pettishly, "I hope you will do no such thing, I really am dying with hunger."

At this moment Falkland made his appearance, apologizing for being late.

As he entered, an indifferent observer would have remarked the deep blush, downcast eye, and tremulous lip of Lucy. Grace saw that they were not lost upon Falkland; she saw, too, that in his manner, there was an embarrassment, joined to an uncertainty, which he tried to conceal, by an attempt at lively conversation. She, knowing that her motives could now be no longer misconstrued, assisted him considerably. She exerted herself, to put him at his ease, and to bring into play Lucy's gay and innocent *naïveté*.

The evening was passing on gaily; Grace had fully succeeded in her endeavours, when Falkland said—

"By the by, I met de Courcy this morning, and am the bearer of his excuses for being unable to pay you a visit *pour prendre congé*; he leaves Paris to-morrow!"

"Dear me, how very sudden!" cried Mrs. Stanhope.

"Yes, he tells me his sister's health is the occasion of this sudden departure. He is going to her, which I am glad to hear, for I fancied there had been some breach; but his manner was altogether confused and extraordinary. I cannot quite make him out."

"Perhaps, he is in love?" remarked Lucy.

"What makes you think that, Miss Maitland?"

"Oh, because—but, my dear Grace, instead of winding my silk, you are entangling it most hopelessly! Worse and worse! I see I must take it out of your hands. Now, Mr. Falkland, if you will hold my silk very quietly, I will tell you why I think lord de Courcy is in love."

"I shall have much pleasure in assisting you, without any bribe," answered Falkland, "if you will only instruct me what I am to do."

"Thus, and thus—only, hold your hands

steady, while I try to unravel the skein Grace has so entangled. There, that will do, and now, I will be as good as my word! I think, then, de Courcy is in love, because that is the only thing that makes people unaccountable."

"Good, but with whom is he in love?"

"Ah! that's a mystery—which I am not sure I could not solve also! But you know, the *on dits* say that he is enamoured of the fair Marquise?"

"And who is the fair Marquise, in question?"

"I quite forgot you had not seen her; why, she is Mme. de Froulay, a very sweet creature, indeed."

"A married woman! I do not, for one moment, believe it. I have known de Courcy many years, and am sure he would not give his heart to a married woman."

"I quite agree with you."

"With whom, then, do you think he is in [illegible]?"

"Ah, that's my secret!"

"Lucy must know a great deal about it," observed Mrs. Stanhope, "having seen lord de Courcy about three times!"

"I saw him once, and that once sufficed!"

"You are very penetrating then, in these matters?" enquired Falkland.

Lucy blushed, as she observed the arch glance with which Falkland accompanied his question. "To be sure I am! But, there—now you are free, for I think we have managed to unravel the skein that Grace took such pains to mystify."

"If I entangled your web," remarked Grace, with an expressive glance at Falkland, "it was unintentionally. But, as it has called Mr. Falkland's ingenuity into play, I shall scarcely allow myself to grieve for my carelessness."

Thus, the evening slipped cheerfully away, and Lucy retired to dream of Falkland, and the ensuing day.

CHAPTER X.

On the morrow, as had been proposed, they called on lady Stuart, and, to Grace's relief, lord Charles was not at home. The sudden departure of de Courcy, was the principal theme of conversation.

"The fact is," remarked lady Stuart, shaking her head, and looking properly shocked, "that, he is *désesperé pour la belle Thérèse,* and dare not trust himself longer near her. She certainly is rather pretty, and he has been so much with her—still I do not see any thing so very particular in her!"

"She is extremely pretty to my taste," observed Lucy. "But Mr. Falkland is dying to see that beautiful picture you have; may we go and look at it?"

"Now, would you believe it, notwithstanding the ecstacies that Stuart was in about that picture, and the trouble he took to get it, he has actually parted with it!"

"Indeed," exclaimed Lucy, "I *am* surprised! lord Stuart seemed so determined not to part with it! Who has it, then?"

"De Courcy; he positively teased him out of it, and I believe gave treble what it was bought for, besides a favourite horse, that Stuart had taken a great fancy to, and wanted to buy of him."

Lucy glanced towards Grace, but, she appeared to be busily employed in looking at some very beautiful cameos.

"Well, then, Mr. Falkland," said Lucy, "you must resign yourself to the disappointment."

"I assure you," observed lady Stuart, "Charles is quite *enragé* about it, and says, if he had known that Stuart would have parted with it, he would have outbid de Courcy; but it was managed so slyly, that the picture was gone, before we knew any thing of the matter."

They soon took leave, and were on their way to the Louvre, when they met Mme. de Froulay's carriage. Grace had seen this lady several times since, her first introduction to her, and felt so interested in her, that she was disposed to cultivate her friendship.

"I was going to prefer a petition to you, Miss Shafton, but I am too late I fear."

"Not if I can be any service to you." replied Grace.

"You can give me great pleasure," said Mme. de Froulay, smiling, "The fact is, I was about to call and ask you to have compassion on me, and give me the benefit of your company for the remainder of the day; but if you

have any agreeable engagement, I will not ask it, for I have nothing to offer but my own poor society."

"You could not offer me a greater attraction;" answered Grace, "so, if Mrs. Stanhope will excuse me, I willingly accept your invitation."

"Just as you like, my dear Grace: we are, always, sorry to lose you, but must not be selfish." And Grace was soon transferred to Mme. de Froulay's carriage.

Grace had a double motive in her choice; she wished to leave Falkland free from her society, and she really felt interested in the fair Italian. That interest was encreased, on the present occasion, by the still deeper melancholy of her countenance: she had, evidently, been weeping, and looked very dejected.

"And now, where shall I take you?" she asked, turning to Grace, and trying to assume an air of cheerfulness.

"Nay, I am entirely at your command, I

bargain for your society only—for the rest, do with me as you please."

Commanding the servant to drive to the Bois de Boulogne, she remarked, "It will be tolerably quiet, at this hour, if you have no objection to it on that account."

Grace liked it the better for that reason, and Mme. de Froulay threw herself back in the carriage, and seemed, for some moments, lost in thought. Suddenly rousing herself, she said—

"It is very selfish in me to have condemned you to the companionship of so dull a creature as myself, but I hope you will pardon me: it is natural for the sorrowing heart to seek for sympathy, and I fancy I have found in you a kind friend to whom I may unburthen my griefs."

"If, by so doing," replied Grace, "you will derive consolation, I may, I am sure, promise you at least my sincere sympathy."

Mme. de Froulay pressed her hand—"You

will think it strange, Miss Shafton," she continued, "that one, so little known to you, should be thus anxious to confide her sorrow to you, but, as I truly told you, the first evening I saw you, I was pleased and attracted. There was that in you, which I had in vain sought for. I am not apt to take these sudden fancies, for I have loved but few; still those I have loved, always made an impression on me at first sight. Believe me, however, that, since I left the convent where I was educated; since I have gone the round of heartless gaiety in this gay city, I have never once seen *her* of whom I could make a friend: may I then hope that you will not reject the friendship, of so desolate a creature?"

Grace was affected, the tone of voice, the tearful eye, the mournful expression of the countenance—all gave evidence of the sincerity of her words.

"I shall be too happy," answered Grace, "to accept your offer; my friendship you have

already won, and, if my society may be the means of alleviating your sorrow, or amusing away your cares, I shall consider myself truly fortunate."

There was nothing in the *words*—any one would have *said* as much—but there was every thing in the look, and in the tone. The Marquise felt satisfied, and she again pressed the hand of Grace.

"But," continued the latter, "how can you, the courted, the flattered,—how can you, who are the idol of every society, call yourself desolate?"

"Alas! my dear friend, what is the friendship of the crowd? it smiles as long as you can return its smile; it flatters as long as you can contribute to its amusement, but does the heart feel less desolate? does the admiration of the crowd enliven the domestic circle? does it bring peace, or happiness?"

"I know," replied Grace, "that appearances are deceitful, and that a smiling coun-

tenance often covers an aching heart; but you are, at all events, happy in your son, and, surely to be a happy mother"—

"A happy mother!" interrupted the Marquise, wringing her hands, and casting her large and expressive eyes towards Heaven, "Yes, I ought to be! *that* has been my only consolation, but that happiness will not long be mine."

"Ugo is well?"

"Thank God! yes, he is well; but, to understand the cause of my grief, you must hear my sad story. It is a long and melancholy one, and, as we may not have a better opportunity, I will, with your leave, relate it."

Grace signified her desire to hear it. She was, indeed, greatly interested, and the Marquise began.

THE STORY OF TERESA.

"My father, Count Ugo de' Tebaldi, a nobleman of Lombardy, of large possessions, and

haughty character, had three children. I was the only daughter, and the youngest of the family. It would have been natural to suppose that I should have been loved and favoured, but such was not my lot.

"My father, ambitious of encreasing the honours and riches of his house, or, at any rate, determined that neither should be diminished in the person of his successor, resolved, that the whole of his large property should devolve upon my elder brother. I was, then, destined for the cloister, and my younger brother Gaetano was brought up for the church.

"My lively disposition, my affectionate, tender, and romantic heart, rendered me both unfit for, and averse to, this vocation; and, as soon as I became old enough to understand the sacrifice required of me, I begged of my mother, with tears and entreaties, to avert so cruel a fate. But what availed it? In the presence of my father I dared not breathe, and the Countess was too much accustomed to blind

submission, and stood too much in awe of her stern husband, to have the courage to intercede for me. Her cares were restricted to the endeavour of reconciling my mind to that, which she represented to be irremediable; for, my father was so inflexible in his resolves, that, once formed, it was not in the power of any thing to shake them.

"At the period I am now speaking of, I had numbered scarcely sixteen summers, and I was not to take my vows until my twentieth year. With the sanguine expectations of youth, I hoped something might occur to prevent the consummation.

"During my noviciate, I frequently passed weeks, sometimes months at home. These were spent in importuning my mother, and in assisting her to receive the numerous guests, who, at certain seasons, were invited to the castle.

"I had just attained my seventeenth year, and, had come home to spend the "*Natale*,"

when, amongst the numerous guests at my father's table, I first saw the Count Rosano. I will not attempt to describe him to you, he was all that my youthful fancy (and it had not been idle) had pictured of brave and noble.

"With my countrywomen, Miss Shafton, love, is not a passion of slow growth; it is like a spark which, when dropped into ignitable materials, soon kindles a flame, that carries away and destroys all before it. I felt that Rosano's eyes were fixed upon me; I was unable to meet their glance; but when I thought he no longer observed me, mine again sought him—only to be again withdrawn, upon encountering his ardent gaze.

"To be brief, our eyes at first discoursed, but Rosano soon found an opportunity of addressing me in words; and I felt the delightful certainty of being loved by the only being, who had ever made any impression upon my heart. Alas! how was that delight converted into misery, when I remembered the hopless fate to which I was condemned.

"I told Rosano of my fatal destination, but he soon calmed my fears, and inspired me with hope. 'Does not my family,' he asked, 'vie with your own, both in birth and wealth? why should he deny you to me? No Teresa, he will not refuse me, he destines you to the cloister, because he will not take from the wealth of the future representative of his house, by bestowing upon you that fortune which would be expected from a Count de' Tebaldi, but I require no portion with you, let him give all to his first born, Teresa will be to me a greater fortune than worlds could bestow! I care not for riches—but did I, I have sufficient to make my Teresa happy.'

"Sufficient to make me happy! I would have dwelt with him in a desert. I wanted not wealth, I cared not for the world—he was my world!

"For some time, we contrived to meet in secret. Every day added to the strength of our passion. Rosano had quite persuaded me

into the belief that my father would give his consent to our union, and I experienced a bliss as deep as it was short lived.

"At last, the day was fixed for my return to the convent. With tearful eyes I sought Rosano, to inform him of our approaching separation. He determined to lose no time in preferring his suit to my father, and all my fears and anxieties returned.

"They were not without foundation! upon Rosano's explaining his wishes, my father coldly declined the honour of his alliance.

"Alas, Rosano little knew the man he was soliciting! He pressed his suit, declaring that he required no portion with me, 'he loved me passionately, he had sufficient for both.'

"My father's pride immediately took the alarm. 'What! did Rosano think that Tebaldi would bestow a portionless bride? did he *dare* to suppose that *that* was the motive, which had induced him to devote his daughter to the cloister?' With the same haughty coldness,

with which he had at first received his request, he begged the subject might never again be mentioned. 'His daughter,' he remarked, 'had chosen her vocation! she had done so with her own free will, and, God forbid, he should endeavour to change so pious a resolution.'

"Rosano could contain himself no longer. Restraining, however, as much as possible, his indignation, he politely assured my father, that in that respect he was mistaken. That his daughter corresponded to his love; and, that if she were forced to enter a cloister, it would be with the sacrifice of her happiness. 'It would be sacrilege—it would be impious, to give her as the spouse of God, when her affections were devoted to an earthly husband.'

"Tebaldi's rage now knew no bounds; his eyes flashed; he ground his teeth, and it was some time ere he found words to express the violence of his ire. He then, with every insulting epithet, reproached Rosano with having

seduced the affections that were previously dedicated to God—with having tampered with the happiness of his child—and, finally, defied him to single combat.

"Heaven forbid? exclaimed Rosano, seeing him frantic with passion, 'heaven forbid that I should raise my arm against the father of Teresa?'

"'Coward, as well as seducer!' shouted my father.

"Rosano smiled, 'Of the former epithet,' he remarked, 'Count Tebaldi knows the falsehood; of the latter, my God! I leave you Sir, you are not sufficiently composed to see this matter in its true light. Time and reflection will, I trust, make you think better of it.'

"'Never, Sir, never!' exclaimed my father, choking with rage. Rosano then left the castle.

"These details I learned, afterwards, from my mother, whom my father violently re-

proached for not having kept a better watch over me.

"After waiting for some hours, sickening with suspense, dreading, yet desiring, to know my fate, my father entered my apartment. Never shall I forget his dark and severe countenance. In a voice even sterner, than his brow might have led me to expect, he said—

"'Teresa, you will prepare instantly to return to your convent; and, as this is the last time you will ever see these walls, I myself intend to conduct you. You will, no doubt, be glad to shorten your noviciate. I have anticipated your wishes, and shall give directions to the Abbess for your immediately taking the vows.' He was turning to depart, when despair giving me courage, I rushed towards him, and threw myself at his feet. In a voice choked by sobs, I implored for mercy, and entreated that he would not devote me to wretchedness.

"I appealed to a heart of stone; he spurned me from him, and, with the same calm, sneering, and stern voice, said—

"'Arise, girl, my decree is irrevocable! You might as well attempt to move a rock, as to hope to change my will. I would rather see you in your grave clothes, than the bride of Rosano! Away!' And, again spurning me from him, he left me insensible on the floor.

"When I re-opened my eyes, I was lying upon a couch, my poor mother bending over me with tearful eyes.

"'Alas! my Teresa,' cried she, in a voice broken by her tears, 'it is the lot of woman to suffer; her life is one sacrifice; bear up, my child, it is better to be devoted to your God, than to serve a cruel husband.'

"It would be in vain to describe my sufferings." The Marquise here sank back exhausted by her emotions.

Grace fully sympathised in her misfortunes; and, after a brief silence, the latter continued—

"In relating my sufferings, I appear to live them over again, so deep was their impression.

But, great as they were, they were unheeded by my inexorable parent. That same day, although so weak that I could scarcely support myself, I was reconducted to my convent. Seated by the side of my father, who appeared perfectly indifferent to my grief, we rode on in silence. At last, when nearly at the gate of the convent, he fixed his eyes upon me, and said—

"'Obedience, and *cheerful* submission will procure you many indulgences. Remember, that your fate is fixed, it is irremediable; and a word of repugnance, or a breath of discontent, will make your life one of rigorous confinement. All depends upon yourself—*remember*!'

"When seated in the parlour, the Abbess noticed my pale and dejected appearance.

"'Yes,' remarked my father, 'the bustle of active life is not to Teresa's taste, she requested to return a few days before the time fixed upon. In fact, she feels that she is not fitted for the

world, and would, with your permission, hasten her dedication to her Almighty spouse.'

"My tongue cleaved to the roof of my mouth. I was shocked at his falsehood and hypocrisy, yet unable to utter a word.

"The Abbess looked surprised, she arose, and, kissing my forehead, congratulated me on so happy a state of mind. 'I am,' she observed to my father, 'truly glad to hear that she is so sincerely disposed. I had some fears on the subject.'

"My father signed to the Abbess to dismiss me, and, as I was retiring, arose to kiss, and bid me farewell. As I shrank from his pretended embrace, he, with a look I shall never forget, whispered, 'Remember.'

"The news of my approaching dedication, soon reached the ears of Rosano. He found means of corresponding with me; he entreated me to fly with him, representing (what I felt too keenly) the tyrannical injustice with which I was treated; the impiousness of offering to

heaven, a heart entirely devoted to an earthly passion. I felt the truth of his reasoning, my heart seconded his wishes, and, in fine, he prevailed. I resolved to fly from, what I considered to be, cruelty and oppression.

"Rosano planned every thing, arranged his affairs in order to leave Italy until the matter should blow over, and a pardon be obtained from the Pope. My pleading compulsion, and enforcing that plea with a large sum of money, would ensure success. All was settled, and, oh! Grace, just when I fancied myself upon the threshold of happiness, I was plunged into still deeper misery, by an awful and fatal occurrence.

"My father had sent a spy into Rosano's service. This wretch offered himself as a follower, and soon so ingratiated himself into his lord's favour, that he was intrusted with the principal part of our correspondence.

"My father, to make revenge more delicious, allowed us to go on in fancied security. The

night arrived, the night destined to bear me from tyranny and wrong. I was already in the arms of my lover, already my foot was on the step of the carriage, when we were suddenly surrounded. My brother Ugo, with a number of armed domestics, rushed upon us.

"Rosano, enraged beyond forbearance, drew his sword, determined to carry me off, or die. He attacked his opponent with such impetuosity, that, in a few moments, he laid him dead at his feet.

"Alas, alas! that opponent was my brother! The darkness of the night prevented Rosano from recognising him!

Instantly, a shout arose. 'He has murdered our lord! Count Ugo is slain!' The cries rang in my ears—lights approached, and Rosano, hopeless of rescuing me, was obliged to make his escape, leaving me senseless at the bottom of the carriage.

"When I recovered, it was to learn that my brother's corpse lay in the chapel of the con-

vent—that brother slain by the hand of my lover!"

Grace shuddered. She was no longer surprised at the sadness impressed on the countenance of the fair Italian; she rather wondered that she had survived so horrible a catastrophe.

Teresa paused to recover herself, and then continued—

"For many weeks, my life was despaired of; and, when at last I did recover, I was a changed being. I no longer shunned the cloister; I looked forward to it as to a haven of peace. Rosano had escaped; thus much I learned from the compassion of one of the lay sisters—it was all I wished to know!

"I was treated with a kindness and gentleness that surprised me. I expected reproaches; I asked for penances; but, I was told to tranquillize my mind, and to endeavour to forget the past.

"About three months passed away, and my

health of body was re-established. My mind was, alas, a prey to the bitterest anguish, the keenest remorse! I would sit whole hours, unconscious of any thing that was passing around me; and the only satisfaction I felt was the certainty that, now, I should never quit the walls of the convent.

"One morning, whilst seated in this state of abstraction, I was requested to prepare for a return to the Castle. I would have remonstrated, but was told the carriage waited.

"With a heavy heart, I prepared for this terrible change. I must return to the house of mourning and desolation—that desolation caused by me! I must see that stern father, who had been the cause of *my* misery, and his own! The idea was torture, yet, I must meet it!

"My preparations were soon made, and I left the convent. The journey appeared shortened, and, such was my dread of arriving, that, as I drew near, I became almost insensible.

When at last the gates were thrown open, and the carriage entered the court yard, I felt my heart sink within me. The steps were let down, and I made an effort to descend, but in doing so, fainted away.

"On recovering, I found my mother anxiously bending over me. Before I could return her embrace, my eye wandered enquiringly around. The form I dreaded was not visible, and I threw myself into the arms that were expanded to receive me.

"For some time, our tears flowed in silence,—at last, I tried to speak; I asked for my father; the Countess shook her head. 'The hand of affliction has been heavy upon him—Teresa, you are now our only child!'

"'You forget, dear mother, you have still Gaetano.'

"The Countess turned away her head, and was silent.

"'What mean you, my mother?' I exclaimed.

"'Whilst weeping often the grave of Ugo,' she answered, 'a messenger arrived to say that Gaetano was seized with a fever, attributed to his unfitness for the monastic life. Tebaldi hastened to his bed-side, but arrived only in time to receive his last breath!'

"I clasped my hands in silent horror.

"Some hours elapsed ere my father entered, and, when he did so, I was shocked at the alteration so brief a space had wrought in his appearance.

"I arose, I dared not lift my eyes to his, I felt that he must hate me—me the cause of all his grief.

"He approached me, touched my forehead slightly with his lips, and said—

"'Teresa, let the past be buried in oblivion; be the consolation of our few remaining years. You have been taught a lesson of obedience!'

"I kissed his hand, and my tears flowed upon it.

"Some weeks passed on in tranquillity.

Still, the heavy gloom that pervaded the castle, was oppressive to the heart. How did I sigh for my quiet cell, where I could weep without restraint! But, it was evident that I was no longer destined for the cloister. Now, that I would gladly have fled to it as a refuge for a breaking heart, that refuge was denied me. Yet, could I rebel? could I refuse to be the consolation of my parents, rendered desolate by me?

"I had retired to my own chamber one day, in order to give vent to the tears, that I was so continually obliged to repress, when, suddenly, my father entered. He sat down by me.

"'Teresa,' he said, 'I have told you that I look to you to be the consoler of my remaining years!'

"'Oh! my Father!'

"'Interrupt me not, but listen. It was my wish that your days should have been spent in the peace and tranquillity of the cloister,—your own disobedience frustrated that desire, and I no longer ask of you the sacrifice.'

"I was about to interrupt him, but, in a voice of thunder, he continued—

"'It can no longer be.' Then, more placidly —'Teresa, I will not have my name extinct; you would not wish it, neither can you desire to unite yourself to the murderer of your brother—you would not wed the man whose hands are stained with his blood?'

"I shuddered.

"'No, I knew you could not! Listen then, I have promised your hand to one, in every way, worthy of you, with this proviso, that your first born son, shall, after the age of five years, be consigned to my care. He shall take my name, shall inherit my titles, shall be unto me as he'—then, suddenly changing his tone of voice, he went on, 'The Marquis de Froulay is fully content with the large portion I bestow with you, and the fame of your beauty. You will reside, after the birth of your son, principally in France, thus leaving all bitter recollections behind you.'

"He paused, but I was unable to reply; I was stunned by the weight of this new calamity.

"'Tis well,' he observed. Then, as if to preclude the possibility of an objection, added 'Upon this union my only hope now rests.'

"He was about to leave me.

"'My father! I exclaimed.'

"He turned—'one favour, one grace I emplore you!—give me some time ere this hated union must be!'

"'What time would'st thou? Am I not fast descending to the tomb? Would'st thou see me there before my desire be accomplished?'

"'Even as you will my father, I am ready!'

"He seemed touched, 'Teresa,' he said, 'I had promised that your nuptials should take place the ensuing month; but, to show you that I can be indulgent, I give you three months from this date. You must, however, prepare to receive the Marquis de Froulay, whom I expect in a few days.'

"You, my dear Miss Shafton, can imagine, far better than it is in the power of words to describe, what were my feelings. How I prayed that I might be carried to my grave, before the period elapsed that was to make me the bride of another. It was in vain. My youth, and excellent constitution struggled with, and overcame the effects of my grief; and, in less than three months, from the fatal announcement, I was the wife of de Froulay—my heart devoted to one, my hand belonging to another.

"According to the terms of the contract, we remained the first year in Italy, at the end of which period, I gave birth to my Ugo.

"This made a great revolution in my feelings. A new and powerful affection absorbed my soul, and I felt grateful to Heaven for such an unexpected source of happiness. De Froulay, who had been an attentive husband, soon showed impatience to return to his own country; while my father, who had hailed the birth

of my son with joy and gladness, seemed oppressed with sadness and alarm, at the idea of parting with him. He could not, however, object, and, therefore, endeavoured to allay his fears by loading me with caresses and injunctions to be careful of his darling. These were, indeed, unnecessary, for he was, already, my only care, and I, even then, thought with horror of the prospect of being obliged, in the course of five years, to resign him.

"When the moment of departure arrived, my father hung over the child with a solicitude that astonished me, and his parting words were, 'Remember, in five years he is mine!'

"Alas, Miss Shafton! when I first heard of the agreement that was to part a mother from her child, it was with perfect indifference, for, I knew not a mother's feelings; I felt that I was a miserable wretch undergoing a penance for an involuntary crime, (for, God knows, I would have saved my brother's life with the sacrifice of my own) and I was passive. But,

I no sooner became a mother, than I understood the full amount of the sacrifice. A new existence, an inexhaustible source of happiness was opened to me, and, if I trembled then, when I had still five years of enjoyment to look forward to, what must I do now, when a few short months will separate me from my boy?"

Teresa burst into tears, nor could Grace be surprised at her emotion, she fully sympathised in her grief, and endeavoured to soothe it.

"You will," she said, "of course accompany him, remain some time with him, and visit him often?"

"I know not. I sometimes fear that my father has never, in his heart, forgiven me; that all he ever desired was an heir to his name and estates; and that, when possessed of my darling, he will banish his unfortunate mother."

"Do not think so,—he cannot, would not,

for his own sake, be guilty of such a refinement in cruelty."

"Well, I will try and hope for the best, but, at all events, de Froulay will never consent to remain long in Italy."

"It is strange," remarked Grace, "that the Marquis should have consented to so unnatural a proceeding as to part with his son—his only son!"

"Reckless as he is," replied Teresa, "I sometimes think he regrets it. He flies from his child, and, when the boy would caress him, sends him from his presence. But, a gamester, and, I fear, a libertine, it makes small impression upon him. He will leave neither fortune nor honourable deeds behind him. Perhaps he thinks the burthen of providing for his son, is well got rid of."

"And Rosano?" asked Grace, "have you ever heard his fate?"

"About three months after my arrival in Paris, as I was walking one day in the Tuile-

ries, my little Ugolino in the arms of his nurse, I saw two gentlemen approaching. One—my heart recognised, long before he was near enough for me to discern his features—it was Rosano! He was leaning on the arm of a young Englishman—that Englishman was de Courcy—what do I not owe him?

"Rosano would have rushed towards me, but, de Courcy, who had heard from him our sad story, witheld him; drew him aside, and represented the folly and scandal of making such a public manifestation of his feelings. For myself, I was too much agitated to proceed, and it was some time ere I found strength to return to my own house.

"The next day, when de Froulay returned home to dinner, he was accompanied by de Courcy; I instantly recognised him, and my heart beat with alarm and agitation. I did not know the noble being, who was so kindly interfering for my peace and welfare. He took an early opportunity of addressing me privately.

"'Rosano,' he said, 'passionately wishes an interview: I have represented to him the useless folly, not to say error, of his desire; but he persists, and, fearing that he would commit some imprudence, I have undertaken to deliver his request, upon his solemn promise that, should you refuse and desire his absence, he will immediately leave Paris.'

"I understood the kind delicacy of his conduct, and thanked him for it. I related to him all that had happened to me, since the fatal night that had separated Rosano and myself for ever. 'And now, I continued, to meet would be attended only with misery to both. There is but one course for us—that is—to forget!'

"'I expected,' answered de Courcy, 'that such would be your answer, and, knowing my friend's impetuosity, I rejoice at it. I feel much for Rosano, but I think, with you, that to meet, would only encrease the sufferings of both.'

"De Courcy insisted upon Rosano's fulfilment of his promise—he left Paris. From this period, I found in de Courcy a friend; an adviser. How sincerely has he endeavoured to reclaim my husband, and to check the ruin that his love of gaming must eventually entail upon us. Often has he sacrificed his more noble pursuits, to accompany him into those haunts of wretchedness, that he might be a check upon his follies. Strange to say, he has acquired great influence over de Froulay; an influence always perceptible in his couduct; for, whilst de Courcy is near, he is, in every respect, a different being. Instead of spending whole nights at the gaming table, he returns regularly to his home, and, for the short period that this lasts, is, if not an exemplary character, at least neither debased nor without feeling."

"You have known lord de Courcy some years, then?" asked Grace.

"Nearly five years, and scarcely one has elapsed, in which he has not spent some few

months in Paris. But he is, of late, sadly changed; some inward sorrow presses on his heart. It is in vain that I ask his confidence: he owns that he is not happy, but declares that nothing can alter his destiny—nothing can console him! It must be some disappointment, or some unfortunate attachment."

They had now arrived at Mme. de Froulay's hotel. She seemed much relieved from having unburthened her heart, and succeeded in her attempt at cheerfulness: the only allusion to her melancholy tale was a tearful glance at Grace, when she embraced her boy.

De Froulay did not come home to dinner—

"No," remarked Teresa, "he is again at the gaming table. I daily anticipate our ruin, and then, indeed, it is some comfort to know that Ugo is provided for."

It was late before Grace left her, and she did so with the promise of spending some part of each day with her, during the remainder of her stay in Paris.

Another week, brought our party within a few days of the time fixed for their departure. Grace was waiting for Teresa, with whom she had promised to pass the day; Lucy was gone to prepare for the morning drive, and Falkland, for the first time since their last interview, found himself alone with Grace.

"Well, Miss Shafton," he asked, "am I to go to Italy?"

"I hope so."

"You have prevailed, Grace! No man, could remain insensible to the amiable naïveté and sweetness of disposition that characterise Miss Maitland; I have determined to do all in my power to make her happy; and, though I can never feel for her, what I have felt for you, I shall still look forward to much happiness with her."

"You will be happy with her!" exclaimed Grace, with tearful eyes, "your love for her will encrease each day that you spend in her society; for she is truly amiable, loving, and

affectionate! You are, now, convinced that I was not far wrong in my conjectures as to the state of her heart?"

Falkland smiled, "I have not," he answered, "many fears upon that head, but I mean to decide the point, before we leave Paris."

Lucy now entered, looking radiant with happiness. Grace glanced expressively towards Falkland: the look said, 'who could be insensible to the love of such a creature?'

"So you are deserting us again, Grace?" cried Lucy. "Do you know, I am getting extremely jealous of this Teresa; she is usurping my place in your heart?"

"Not so, dear Lucy, there is room enough for both."

"I do not know that, and I am not fond of divided affections; but, you will own that I have a right to the largest share of yours?"

Grace smiled, as the playful girl, putting her arms around her, kissed her affectionately. "Poor Teresa," she remarked, "has, just

now, greater claims upon my attention; for she, my dear Lucy, is unhappy, whilst you"—

"Whilst I," answered Lucy, "selfish and ungrateful that I am, am blessed in every way. Go, my dear Grace, go!" as she saw Mme. de Froulay's carriage drive up to the door, "Remember, that, if, in this instance, I am too selfish, it is because I hold your love too precious to bear the loss of one tittle."

Grace smiled upon her affectionately, and withdrew to join Teresa.

They took their favourite drive to the Bois de Boulogne, and, as they passed on, Grace observed that Teresa seemed more than usually sad.

"How I shall miss you, dear Grace?" she exclaimed. "In a few more days, and I shall be again desolate!"

"Do not say so, my friend; we shall soon meet again. Have you heard from Italy?"

"Yes, I received a letter yesterday, reminding me that the time was drawing near, and that we were impatiently expected."

"Then you will leave Paris almost as soon as we shall?"

"I have not had an opportunity of speaking to de Froulay. It is as I expected, (now that he no longer has de Courcy to restrain him) his nights and days are spent at the gaming table; his looks are haggard, and he avoids me."

Grace sighed.

"But what avails it? I cannot stem the torrent; it must take its course!" Then, changing the conversation, she said, "I am terribly reproached for my monopolization—Lord Charles is furious, and threatens to break in on our tête à têtés."

"I trust he will not; pray, prevent it."

Teresa smiled. "I guessed," she observed, "that his suit would be unfortunate; and although I approve his taste, I own he is not exactly the man for you. I know whom I would choose for you!"

"Nay do not choose at all, dear Teresa, for

you know I am vowed to friendship—love is too full of woes: I will have nothing to do with him!"

Teresa shook her head. "No one," she remarked, "scorns the power of love with impunity: besides you know what our divine Dante says—

"*Amor, che al cor gentil ratto s'apprende,*"

And again—

"*Amor, che a nullo amato amar perdona.*"

Grace smiled faintly, "We must not doubt so great an authority," she replied, "so I must be on my guard."

Teresa's cheerfulness was evidently forced: she occasionally sank into fits of utter abstraction. Suddenly awaking from one of these, she turned towards Grace, and asked—

"Did you ever feel an unusual presentiment of coming evil? a gloom, which no effort can dispel, an undefined dread of some great misfortune? It is in vain that I try to banish such a feeling from my mind, there is an icy hand

upon my heart, which will not suffer me to forget or banish this—I must call it—presentiment of evil."

"Do not let it alarm you;" replied Grace, "every one, I believe, has such a feeling occasionally. My father thought it arose generally from physical causes: but, there are people who, far from imagining such a feeling of depression to indicate coming misfortune, have the contrary opinion. The Poet Shelley, for instance, used to say, that 'the only presentiment he found infallible, was, the certain advent of some evil fortune, *whenever he felt peculiarly joyous.*'"

"Indeed," said Teresa, "then might I laugh at evil fortune, for I shall never again know what it is to feel joyous."

The day notwithstanding the efforts Grace made to arouse her friend, passed heavily away. Teresa felt it, and, as they sat in the evening, conversing and listening to the prattle of the little Ugo; Teresa remarked—

"I had done better to have admitted Lord Charles; he would, at least, have covered my dullness."

"His presence would not have added to my comfort. I shall begin to think there is more formality than friendship between us, if you say another word upon this subject. I am quite happy with yourself and Ugo!"

At this moment the *bonne* entered, to fetch Ugo to bed; but the child expressed an unusual unwilligness to go. "Let me," he cried "'stay only till papa comes home; I have not seen him for such a long time."

"Your papa may be very late, Ugo; you will see him to-morrow."

"Then let me stay till dear Grace goes; you know she is soon going away from us, and, then, what shall I do?"

A violent ring at the entrance, interrupted Teresa's answer.

"That is papa. Now Louise, I shall not go to bed till I bid him good night."

"It is de Froulay," said Teresa. There was a pause of expectation, but he did not make his appearance.

Teresa rang the bell, "Is it Monsieur?" she asked of the attendant.

"Yes, Madame."

"Let him know that Miss Shafton is here."

"I did mention it, Madame, but M. le Marquis, hurried into the library, and desired he might not be interrupted."

"Enough!" then, turning to Ugo, "you hear, my love, that papa is busy, and we may not disturb him. You will see him to-morrow."

"And," said Grace, "you shall come and see me to-morrow, also."

With these promises the boy was fain to be satisfied, and, without further remonstrance, was carried to bed. The evening passed away, yet the Marquis did not appear.

"I thought," observed Teresa, "that your presence would have attracted him, but, I see there is no hope."

Grace's carriage being announced, she arose to bid Teresa 'Good night.' The salon door was open, and she was already on the staircase, when the report of a pistol was heard! There was a sudden pause of horror—the domestics rushed into the room, with countenances in which terror and consternation were depicted—

"What is it? what is the matter?" exclaimed Teresa.

"Monsieur le Marquis!" ejaculated Antoine, the Marquis' valet, in a whisper of horrible import.

"What of him, what is it?" again cried Mme. de Froulay, still more wildly.

"Have you been in?" asked Grace, in a faltering voice.

"Ah, Mdlle. the door is fastened."

"You must instantly force it!" said Grace. Then, taking Teresa by the hand, she led her back into the room, and tried every means to compose and strengthen her; but her own

alarm was so great, that no small exertion was necessary to enable her to perform her task.

The door was soon forced, and their worst fears were verified—the unhappy victim of his own folly, lay stretched upon the floor, his skull shattered literally to pieces!

Grace immediately sent back the carriage, with an entreaty that Mrs. Stanhope, and, if possible, Mr. Falkland, would instantly return in it. She trusted the latter had not yet departed, and felt how necessary his presence would be. The house was, already, a scene of horror and confusion. A surgeon had been sent for, but he only confirmed, what they before were too certain of, that the Marquis was quite dead.

Teresa was incapable of any thing; she seemed stupified by this new calamity.

Fortunately, Falkland was with Mrs. Stanhope when the message arrived, and instantly accompanied her to the *chaussé d' Antin*. His

presence was most useful; he conjectured the cause that led to the frightful act, and, surmising that, on the morrow, the house would, in all probability, be beset by creditors, he hastened to collect de Froulay's papers. He advised that Mme. de Froulay should have her jewels and wardrobe packed up, and that she should remove for the present to the *rue Castiglione.*

De Froulay had left letters, the writing of which had, most probably, employed him since his entrance; one was to his wife, another to Count Tebaldi, and a third to Lord de Courcy.

From that to his wife, it appeared that he had had a run of excessive ill luck, and, with the madness that attends all gamblers, had, in the hope of regaining his immense losses, gone on staking deeper and deeper, until both ruin and dishonour stared him in the face. He told her that he deeply regretted his imprudence, but that he had one happy reflection, which was the knowledge that both herself and

her son would be provided for. 'You will, of course,' he wrote, 'immediately return to Italy, where you have a home,—happier, I trust, than that you have of late enjoyed with me. Farewell, Teresa! I never possessed your love, therefore, though I know your amiable nature will cause you to grieve for me, that grief will be of short duration. I have always regretted having consented to give up my boy to your father, for, if I had had his name and welfare to think of, it would have been some restraint on the passion that has finally ruined me.'

Teresa's tears flowed during the persual of this letter, and they were a salutary relief to her. She consented to accompany Grace and Mrs. Stanhope to the rue Castiglione, leaving orders that Louise should bring Ugo the first thing in the morning. She was most anxious that the fatal event should be concealed from him, and could rely upon the attention and fidelity of Louise, who had been with him from his infancy. Every arrangement being

left in Falkland's hands, the miserable widow of the suicide de Froulay, left the scene of death and desolation.

CHAPTER XI.

We must now return to de Courcy, who, as our readers will remember, had formed the determination of justifying himself in the eyes of Grace for a conduct that must have appeared to her both unfeeling and unmanly.

Delayed in his attempts to see Grace by her illness, he yet anxiously awaited an opportunity. Then came Falkland's arrival, he was ever there! It was vain, without requesting a particular interview, to hope to see her alone. 'And why,' thought de Courcy, 'should I intrude myself again upon her? she will soon

be the wife of Falkland, and is, now, perfectly indifferent as to what my motives may have been.'

With a burning fever of heart he withdrew. Still, he was undecided; the carriage was at the door, and Grace would, probably, remain at home—perhaps alone. Recollecting some purchases he wished to make, he entered a shop under the opposite colonnade, whence he watched, with eager eye, to see who entered the carriage. Presently, Mrs. Stanhope, and Lucy appeared, and Falkland too—his heart bounded—but—no, he did not enter; for having handed the ladies in, he returned to the house—returned to pass the happy hours with Grace, his Grace.

He left the shop; his determination was taken; he would see her no more! Of what consequence was it to him what she thought of him? she had soon learned to forget him; and he, too, yes, he would endeavour to banish her from his heart!

A few moments brought him to his own

apartments in the rue Rivoli; he entered, threw himself into a seat, and, for some moments, abandoned himself to 'the ecstacies of utter dejection'.*

He was aroused by the entrance of Larry.

"Has your lordship seen the letthers that have come to the fore, durin' your honour's pilgrimations?"

De Courcy had not, and, Larry while laying them before him, cast an anxious glance at his master's dejected countenance; then, with a woful shake of the head, withdrew.

As de Courcy took up the letter that first came to hand, he started; it was from his sister, and, as the post mark informed him, was from Italy. It contained but a few lines, but those lines deeply affected him.

"Ernest," she wrote, "I am ill—dying! They have sent me here to recover—but, my malady is past the reach of remedy! Neither

* Byron.

change of air, nor change of scene, can bring back peace to my heart.

"I would see you before I die; I have deeply wronged you—more deeply than you are, even yet, aware: yet, God knows, I always loved you! Alas, I mixed you up with my own passions, and ambitious views, and, so, lost you. Will you come to me? will you come and give me your forgiveness, and close my eyes? I know your generous nature, and will not doubt it!"

De Courcy was greatly shocked—he did not hesitate, but, ringing the bell, gave orders for departure on the morrow. Then, resuming his hat and cane, he strolled into the street.

Larry did not venture a remark. He stood, for some time, gazing after his master, then broke into the following strain—

"It was a boy in a doldrum*,
Sate by the river Lee;
And 'ah!' he cried, 'thou bubbling tide,
I'm full o'"——somethin' endin' in 'e'.

* A dilemma.

'By fate's imparious mandate,
I'm forced to cut and run;
And to remove from her I love,
Extorts my'——somethin' endin' in 'un'.

"Thrue for you, Larry Monaghan! Thunder an' turf, what's come to the masther at all racin' an' rampagerin' from place to place in sich an unconnicted manner? and, now, above all, that Miss Grace is right forenint him, a' waitin' to have her hand squeejed, an' the priest sint for—now he's away agin, like the gunner's apprintice that found himself takin' a bird's eye view of natur straddle-leg on a cannin ball! An' there's Jessy, poor little sinsitive cratur, exposed to the attintions of an affectionate multitude, an' I not to the fore.

"Oh! who would be a lover,
That was enforced to roam,
An' lave the object of his choice,
To ruminate at home?

I'm thinkin' he'd not be throubled with much cuteness, any how!

> "For though, agin returnin',
> He finds her all his own,
> How can he tell, while he was gone,
> One half the cratur's done?

"Unpossible, quite unpossible! she might have married half a dozen husbands, an' fed 'em on asnic, which is convanient food for gettin' rid of 'em. But, Jessy is a taste below that ambition—the quality may have it all to themselves for her, God bless her! Well, 'it's a long lane that has no turnin',' as the buttherfly remarked in the wather spout: an' 'we must bear our fate without blinkin', as was said by the two blind coach hosses on the frosty road. An' I'd like to know what's to hinder me from goin' to bid the colleen good bye, instead of standin' here like a born idjut?"

Away Larry posted, and was not long in finding an opportunity of speaking to Jessy.

"We're goin', agin, Jessy asthore; an' I'm come to take my adjew of you!"

"Now, you don't say so, Larry; you're only joking me, I know?"

"Is it a jokin' I am, my darlin? why thin, I wish, from my sowl, it was nothin' else! but it's sartin sure the revarse, an' no joke at all, at all!"

"Well then, I must say I am rather surprised, Larry."

"I'm thinkin' you are, Jessy, an' so am I, which is more surprisin', bekase, you see, I've sarved an apprinticeship to his tanthrums."

"Well to be sure! and he's been to ask every day after Miss Grace, when she was ill."

"Is'nt it wondherful thin? an' they don't seem to consoort together agin! Sich a break I never heerd talk of! But, may be, she's ingaged to some one else?"

"Lord love you, Larry, no such thing! She's dying piecemeal about him, poor thing; and, if she don't have him, she'll be Miss Grace all her life. Though there's plenty sighing and adoring her; there's Mr. Falkland—

but I'm most sure, she told him she would not have him; and, now, he's turning his thoughts to Miss Lucy, who is a nice young lady to be sure, but—not to compare to my young lady! And then, Larry, there's Lord Charles, that's always coming and saying fine things to me, to try and get a word with her; but I'm not to be bribed, and I wouldn't annoy Miss Grace for the world! So, though he asked me the other day to say nobody was in the drawing room, and he himself there all the while, I did not gratify his request, but I told Miss Grace, and she sent word down that she was not well enough to see any body. So, Larry, that doesn't look as if she was going to be engaged."

"Thrue for you Jessy agra! An' so, you think she's rally frettin' about him?"

"I'm sure of it, though I never dare mention his name. But, even the flowers he used to give her, are all treasured up, and, when she thinks I'm not observing her, I often see her

looking into a book, he used to read out of, that's marked all over with his pencil. So, I tell you, she's dying for him!"

"So's he for her. An changed an' cantankerous he's got through it; an 'he's as thin as a kitchen poker. His coats arn't home a week, before they make him look like an unpinshined vetheran in a senthry box. He thin's so awful fast, that, if somethin' aint done, an' that soon, he'll be nothin' at all but flue like the Kilkinny cat."

"We must trust in providence to bring them together again, Larry."

"If one could say a word, I shouldn't mind so much; but he goes furious fierce, when I mintshins her name, an' thin, I retires,—for a rason I have. Yet, though he won't bear me to spake of her, he's always a contimplatin' a picthur he's jist bought, which is all the same as a porthray of her. An' thin, Jessy dear, you might see the big tares thravel out of his eyes, an' dig sich trinches in his cheeks. God help

us, Jessy, it's an awful thing to love one o' your sect! Why is it you drive us mortials so crazy? I don't know how it is, but, somehow, fallin' in love is like fallin' into timptation—a thing to pray aginst. But, it's no use now, aither to him or me, God help me! for, it's a similar affliction has got hoult o' the pair of us!"

Jessy blushed, sighed, looked down; then, as if this confession was a matter of indifference to her, said, "What! are you in love Larry? well, I should never have thought it!"

"'Am I in love! she'd niver ha' thought it!' Do you think I'd lit the masther have the accusin' me o' sich a bratche o' duty, as not to folly his example? Holy St. Lawrence, listen to her! an' she knowin' it all the time in her conscience, ever since I saw her! oh, the thrickery, and the cuteness of a famale bussum is beyant diskivery!"

"Indeed, Larry, I do not think it is polite in you to be a disparaging of our sex in that

false manner. I am sure, you never told me you were in love before; so, how was I to know it? and, if you are in love I don't see what's to make you unhappy."

"Bekase the masther is so; an' bekase, like him, I can't come to a right understanding with the object o' my conflagration. What's the use o' eyes,—what's the advantage o' knowin' looks an' smiles, an' blishes, an' thrimblings, an' sthammerings, whin the bein' we adore is insinsible, and won't understand them? Oh! Jessy, Jessy, God forgive you the cruel coorse you lade!"

"Indeed Larry," replied Jessy, whimpering, "I think it's you that are cruel, for to go and accuse me in this manner! What have I done?"

"Well, its useless going on—plain spakin' is plain spakin', but, in this idintical instance, its like high Dutch to an Irish boniveen*. Adjew, Jessy, adjew relintless woman!"

* Little pig.

"My heart wil burst asundher,
With the vilence o' my grief,
Like a bull, oppressed with wondher,
In whitechapel viewin' beef.

"He knows the fate before him,
From the sight that meets his eye,
An', a great big thrill comes o'er him,
When he hears, 'Now, what'll you buy?'

"Adjew, Jessy! God pardon you for assassinatin' o' me this day!"

Jessy caught hold of his arm, and was about to expostulate with him; and, doubtless, an understanding would have ensued, but, at this moment, her mistress' bell rang; so without staying to censure Larry, who made bold to salute her, she slowly departed, sighing, "Good bye, Larry! God bless you!"

De Courcy, wishing to bid Teresa farewell, took his way to de Froulay's. It was on his return from thence, that he encountered Falkland, radiant, as he fancied, with happiness.

How every thing is coloured by our own

imagination! De Courcy saw in Falkland the accepted and happy lover of Grace, whilst, at that very moment, Falkland was the twice rejected. He mistook surprise and confusion, for elation and triumph, and hastily flew from his own happiness. One word would have made him the happiest of men, but, taking that for granted which his fears had magnified into a certainty, he asked no question, and, with a heart tortured by jealousy and disappointment, again hastened to quit the spot, which was hallowed by the presence of her he loved.

On the morrow, de Courcy was on his way to the beautiful lake of Como, upon whose borders, the Duke de' Rinucci had a superb villa.

The duchess lay extended on a sofa, which was drawn near the window in order to give her the advantage of the balmy air that entered, and that she might gaze on the gorgeous scene that lay before her.

We will not attempt a description of this scene. It has become such a famous resort, that few of our readers will require a description of its beauties; and therefore, to memory we resign a task, which none can so well perform. We, moreover do not feel either the ambition or capability of painting a scene, which older and more experienced pens have long rendered interesting.

As the duchess' eye wandered over this scene of beauty and of peace, a deep sigh shook her frame. Her attenuated form, and the sharpened outline of her features, spoke too plainly the truth of her assertion, that 'she was beyond the aid of earthly remedy.'

It is melancholy to behold the young and lovely on the brink of eternity. Melancholy, even when the chastened spirit seems prepared to meet its creator; how much more so, when, instead of calm resignation, and pious hope, the mind is still agitated by human passions—when pride is the reigning expression of the

countenance, and the prime supporter of the suffering frame—when the heart, instead of being sensible of its own wickedness, and filled with mercy and forbearance, still pants for revenge as the chief satisfaction that this world can bestow! Such alas, was the state of the Duchess' mind! No friendly hand was near, to sooth her couch of suffering; no kind voice to whisper consolation; she felt this, and the harsh feelings, that had so long predominated, became harsher still. No husband to soothe, no child to weep for her—the first she had ever despised, and now, unconcious of her real danger, he was amusing himself elsewhere, the second she had never desired. But the desolation of her situation oppressed her; the complaint rose to her lips; and, sometimes: the tear to her eye. But both were suppressed; she trembled at the approach of death, yet she allowed no outward sign of fear to escape her—all was pride—pride to the last.

"No letter yet?" she asked of Paolo, as he returned from his unfruitful embassy.

"None, illustrissima!"

Her head sank back on the pillow.

Manette, who stood watching her lady's deathlike countenance, suggested that, perhaps, as the Earl had not written, he might be already on the road.

The duchess replied not, but a bitter smile passed over her shrunken features.

At this moment, the sound of an approaching carriage disturbed the stillness that reigned around.

Paolo looked at his lady, and left the room—he returned almost instantly, it was the Earl.

A slight flush coloured the pale cheek, but it soon subsided. She signed to Paolo, to usher him in.

"Had not your Grace," asked Manette, "better take a little time to prepare yourself, the agitation may—"

"I *am* prepared, Manette; you may withdraw!"

All de Courcy's angry feelings (if indeed any

remained) vanished, when he beheld his sister. Tenderly embracing her, and anxiously regarding her wasted form, he exclaimed—

"Why, oh, why Augusta, did I not know of this before?"

The Duchess pressed his hand—she tried to suppress the tears that, at the unwonted sound of kind and real sympathy, arose, but the effort was vain—tenderness triumphed over pride! bursting into an hysterical flood of tears, her head fell upon his shoulder.

De Courcy allowed the tide of feeling to subside; then, tenderly soothing her, he tried to bring back composure.

"Dearest Augusta, be composed: all will yet be well."

"Oh, Ernest, you, whom I have most wronged"—

"Talk not of it—I know all—will forget all—never let the past be mentioned between us! But, where is your husband—they tell me he is from home—why does he leave you to suffer alone?"

"It is only lately that I have been so much worse. Rinucci is at Florence on some affairs, but will soon return. His presence, however, rather aggravates my sufferings; he cannot see my danger, is restless of confinement, and gathers guests around him, who disturb my tranquillity."

"But you must have further advice, I will send to Paris for—"

The Duchess smiled, held forth her transparent hand, pointed to her sunken cheek, "Ernest, it is useless, I die!—could I but know you happy, ere I leave you"—

"Hush, we will talk of that at some future period; at present, my happiness will consist in endeavouring to restore you!"

De Courcy did, indeed, fear that that endeavour would be unavailing; he, however, lost no time in sending for further advice. But he had a still more important duty to perform, that of trying to render his sister more fit for that eternity she must so soon enter upon.

He commenced his task with tenderness and firmness. He found her mind utterly devoid of either religious principles or hopes. She had never given the subject a thought. How should she? Bred in the career of folly, which, if not in itself vice, soon leads to it, it required nothing less than the hand of death to lead her mind to such contemplations. But, in the bright mid-day of her youth, how think of death? Alas! not only the thought, the certainty, was now thrust upon her, and she trembled at its approach. The combined idea of an eternity of happiness for the good, and an eternity of woe for the evil, is one that is engrafted upon every mind—and the Duchess felt too surely that the former was not for her. Had she known the principles of the religion of which she professed herself to be a member, she would have been struck with still greater horror at the enormity of her sins; while, in its promises, she would have found hope.

Such was the state of her mind, when de

Courcy arrived. He felt, at once, the deep importance of the point. He determined to seek out the evil, and, if possible, to eradicate it; then, turn her mind towards that repentance which is alone available with God.

This was no easy task, for the haughty spirit that sickness might have subdued, had rebelled against the neglect it had experienced. She panted for revenge against her faithless lover—what! should she suffer all the pangs of jealousy and rage, whilst he roamed the world of pleasure? she would have annihilated him!

De Courcy's task, then, was difficult; but he did not despair; he laboured, with a mild energy, that told of his anxiety. She loved him, and, therefore, listened: she esteemed him, and, therefore, his arguments made a deep impression. At first they alarmed, then soothed; and, when he told her that even the greatest sinner might, with sincere repentance, hope—a gleam of sunshine shone upon her

heart to which it had been long a stranger. Once aroused, half the difficulty was over. Still, there was much to be done, and the time was short.

We will leave de Courcy in his high employ,—the highest that can occupy the attention of man—that of saving a soul—of leading a sinner to repentance and to God.

CHAPTER XII.

Some time elapsed, after the melancholy decease of de Froulay, before it was possible for the hapless Teresa to quit Paris. Grace would not consent to leave her, so it was finally arranged that they should all proceed to Italy together.

The affair made a terrible noise; crowds of inquisitive friends, under the pretence of sympathy, flocked to have their curiosity gratified. Mrs. Stanhope, in order to get rid of them, gave directions for a 'not at home' during the remainder of their stay.

Lord Charles was not included in the general sentence, but, as Grace entirely devoted herself to her friend, his frequent calls were only productive of disappointment to him.

"Am I never to see Miss Shafton again?" he asked, one morning of Mrs. Stanhope.

"Never" she replied, "is a long period; but she is, at present, so entirely devoted to friendship, that you have but small chance of seeing much of her, during the remainder of our stay."

"But I do not see her at all; I do not catch even a glimpse of her. I am sure, my dear friend, you will take her place for a brief space? I wish to ask her opinion of that work I sent her the other day."

"I do not think she really has had time to look at it."

"Then you will not carry my request?"

"Oh, certainly, if you wish it."

Mrs. Stanhope went straightway to the

sanctum that Grace and Teresa had chosen for themselves.

"My dear Madam," cried Grace, on hearing the request, "why did you not make some excuse for me?"

"I did all I could, my love, but it was of no avail: he is determined upon seeing you; so you may as well get it over. To be sure, I shall lose the pleasure of his company every morning, which, as Lucy and Falkland have become poor companions for any one but themselves, did not come amiss; but I must console myself."

Grace, very unwillingly, prepared to encounter her lover; but she felt that Mrs. Stanhope was right; and, with a hearty wish that he had spared both himself and her the pain of a refusal, she entered the room.

He flew towards her, and took her hand to lead her to a seat.

"Now, this is really kind and compassionate; how shall I thank you?"

Grace gently, but gravely, withdrew her hand, as she replied—

"I understood, from Mrs. Stanhope, that you wished particularly to see me."

"Wished to see you! I have been dying, actually expiring with impatience, to have that pleasure. Indeed, it is too cruel thus to deprive your friends of your society."

"You are aware," answered Grace gravely, "that Mme. de Froulay requires all our care. She is quite incapable of supporting any other society than our own; and my inclination, as well as my friendship for her, lead me to share her solitude."

"Then, *l'amitié* is to absorb every thing?"

"Or," continued Grace, "it is not worth the title."

"My dear Miss Shafton, I trust you do not intend to restrict your sentiments to such cold and limited bounds; it would be the height of injustice in one, who inspires all who see her with the warmest and most tender of sentiments!"

"I see," observed Grace, rising, "that, after all, you have really nothing particular to say to me; so, I shall, for the present, bid you adieu, for I was very particularly engaged."

"Indeed, Miss Shafton," said Lord Charles, detaining her, "I have much to say to you; but I fear that, however interesting the subject is to me, *you* may deem it unworthy of your consideration: still, my happiness is too deeply involved in its decision, to admit of further delay. You must have observed my deep interest in you—you must be aware of my ardent devotion."

"I hope" said Grace, "that I have never given any encouragement to that feeling; if I have, I am not aware of it."

Lord Charles bit his lip,—"No, my dear Miss Shafton, I cannot, for a moment, accuse you of encouraging my attentions; at the same time, not seeing any one more favoured than myself, I have been induced to hope. And, surely, one who accords so much to friendship, will not be insensible to—love!"

"It is even so," replied Grace, "I give all to friendship, nothing to love!"

"Let me hope," answered he more gravely, "let me trust you do not mean this! My entire, my devoted love is yours! I would that my fortunes were more worthy of your acceptance: they would have been more splendid had I had the good fortune to be first born; but, I believe there is little doubt that I shall eventually arrive at the earldom; for"—

"Hold, my lord! you cannot think so meanly of me, as to suppose that either fortune or title would weigh in the least with me? No, my decision would have been the same, could your lordship have presented me with a ducal coronet. I feel highly honoured by your choice, which I trust will soon render happy, one more deserving."

"That is impossible!"—There was a short pause—"And this, Miss Shafton, this is your final decision? I may not hope that time and

entire devotion, will change a resolve so subversive of all my hopes?"

The tone in which this was uttered, moved Grace, but she answered with firmness—

"It is indeed my final decision: neither time nor circumstances can change it!"

Lord Charles took her hand—"Farewell, then," he said, "I will not importune you with my presence; but, believe me, it will be long ere the impression you have made upon my heart, can be effaced." Kissing her hand respectfully, he hurriedly withdrew.

Grace walked to the window, and gazed, with vacant eye, upon the passing scene. Her thoughts were wandering far away, and the moments passed unheeded. She was aroused from her abstraction by a gentle touch, and, turning slowly round, beheld Lucy. Her cheek was flushed, but it was with the hue of happiness.

"Where is Falkland?" she asked.

"He will return!"

"Oh, I never doubted that, dear Lucy: I did not expect he would be long absent!" replied Grace, with a quiet smile.

"Ah, Grace, I wish I could see you as happy as I am at this moment!" exclaimed Lucy, with a sigh of pleasure.

"Make me so, then, by allowing me to sympathise in your happiness;" replied Grace affectionately, "Come," she continued playfully, "I think I need not be doubtful as to its cause, and may venture to pronounce that Falkland has not sued in vain."

"Will you so?" returned her friend in the same tone, "then let me tell you that there are others, beside yourself, who are not without penetration in *les affaires du cœur*. Eh, Miss Shafton?"

"Oh, I am no reader of riddles, dear Lucy! I will congratulate you, however, with all my heart on your prospects of happiness."

And sincerely did Grace congratulate her friend. It was balm to her wounded feelings

to reflect that she had been the means of making Lucy happy—and not Lucy alone, but she felt that Falkland must appreciate the blessing of possessing such a heart.

There now remained nothing to detain them longer in Paris. All de Froulay's property had been immediately seized upon by his creditors. There was one, in particular, to whom he had lost immense sums, and whose demands there appeared scarcely sufficient to satisfy. All Teresa's property was included in the bills this man held, and the hapless widow found herself, by this stroke, reduced at once to beggary. She, however, felt secure of an asylum in her parental home, and sympathised in the general feeling of pleasure, at quitting the city that had been so fatal to her happiness.

CHAPTER XIII.

In the mean time, de Courcy continued beside the couch of his suffering sister; and amply were his exertions repaid by observing the salutary influence that his arguments and persuasions had wrought upon her.

She no longer looked upon death with terror—she no longer lived for revenge—she no longer even desired it. Sensible of her own enormous sins, she had learned to be charitable to the failings of others. Her disease seemed somewhat alleviated by this tranquil state of mind, and, although no hope

could be entertained of her final recovery, de Courcy felt happy that she was spared to pursue the task of repentance.

Through the medium of the *Parisien* journals, he learned the dreadful death of de Froulay, and, almost as quickly, received the letter that the unfortunate man had left for him. It was enclosed in another, and what were his emotions, as it was placed before him, to recognise the hand writing of Grace!

With a trembling hand and beating heart, he tore it open; but the beloved characters no longer met his eye. The letter from de Froulay fell to the ground, and a few explanatory lines from Teresa were all that the envelope contained. What had he expected? what had he hoped? he knew not; but the sight of her hand-writing had conjured up a thousand recollections with eager and anxious feelings, too vague and undefined to be denominated hopes, and, yet, sufficiently partaking of the nature of the latter, to leave the sting of disappointment.

Teresa dwelt but little on the fatal event,—de Froulay's letter would explain all. She spoke of Grace, and detailed her kindness, "Surely," she wrote, "it was my guardian angel that inspired me with the desire to know her; for she has been to me more than friend or sister. She consoles me under my severe misfortune—in fine, her friendship is a solace, the value of which it would be impossible to describe. You cannot imagine what she is, and I can give you an idea only by saying that she appears to live solely to contribute to the happiness of those around her. Does her own consist in this? To all appearance it certainly does; and, yet, something tells me that she has some secret grief for which she seeks a balm. Farewell, my friend. I shall soon meet my stern father. I tremble as the time approaches but; he cannot refuse me an asylum with my son, and I ask no more."

The letter of de Froulay deeply affected de Courcy. The writer deplored the latter's absence

as having been the occasion of his final ruin. "I have," he said, "fallen into the hands of a villain! Had my losses happened by fair play, I should not so much regret it; but I have every reason to believe that I have been the dupe of a smooth-tongued rascal, calling himself von Betrug. I fell into the toils of this wretch, and he never left me, until he had possessed himself of every thing. Yes, I am beggared! and, which is worse, dishonoured; for the fellow holds bills to an immense amount, which it would be impossible for me to meet There is, then, but one remedy—when I am gone, he will: for his own sake, be silent. Farewell de Courcy, I hold the instrument of destruction in my hand—in another minute, and the hand that writes this will be powerless—the mind, that directs that hand, annihilated, or——!"

De Courcy was greatly shocked. Though he could not but look upon de Froulay with contempt, yet his tragical and untimely end

filled him with grief and horror. Who can contemplate, unmoved, the spectacle of a fellow creature thus rushing into the presence of his Maker, and commencing eternity with crime?

A few weeks passed by; the Duchess' health was so much ameliorated, that, as is usual in this insiduous disease, the patient began to entertain hopes of recovery. Happily, these hopes, in no way, destroyed the wholesome effects produced upon her mind by her brother's sincere efforts for her conversion. They were, on the contrary, accompanied with fervent resolutions of leading such a life, as should, in some measure, atone for her past errors. De Courcy heard her express these hopes, and these resolutions, with a grieved spirit, for he felt how groundless they were.

"I see that you do not think I shall recover, Ernest," she said to him, one day, as he sat listening to her plans for the future, "but, I think, I shall cheat you."

"I pray heaven you may, dear sister."

"I feel so much stronger, you can have no idea"—

"I wonder Rinucci does not come!" exclaimed de Courcy.

An expression of exquisite pain passed over the countenance of the invalid.

"What was I to him?" she replied, "I cannot expect that he should care to play the nurse."

"I cannot say that he was one likely to inspire affection."

"Ah, Ernest, had I been different, had I shown him some affection, who knows what he might have been?—"

At this moment, Paolo entered with a letter for de Courcy. He saw, at a glance, that it was from Teresa.

"I see, by the length of your epistle, Ernest," said the Duchess, smiling, "that I must dispense with you for a time; and, as I am really inclined to repose, we will summon Manette to take your place."

De Courcy retired to peruse his letter, the contents of which we shall lay before the reader.

'My Friend.

'Shed tears for the unfortunate Teresa; the source of hers' is for ever dried. Yes, de Courcy, fate has filled to the brim my cup of misery. But I must explain to you the cause of my anguish; you will, already, have guessed it, for you knew I had but one hope, but one joy, and that is now taken from me!

'The Count de' Tebaldi, for, I can no longer call him 'father,' visited me at Milan, shortly after our arrival. I hastened to meet him, my every hope depended upon that meeting, and, though I could not conceive the possibility of his refusing me an asylum, a sad foreboding hung around my heart.

'Leading my boy by the hand, I entered the room in which he awaited me. The cold politeness of his greeting, chilled me to

the heart; he scarcely touched the cheek I offered to his salute: but he took Ugo in his arms, and surveyed him with a look of satisfied pride. The child shrank from his cold and stern glance, and, escaping from his embrace, ran to bury his face in my bosom.

"So,' he exclaimed, with an accent of mingled rage and bitterness, 'he has, already, been taught to hate his grandfather.'

"Not so, my father; but you are, at present, strange to him. He will soon learn to love you.'

"He shall, at any rate, have those about him, who will exercise a less baneful influence over his young mind.'

"Indeed, my father, I have ever taught him to love you!'

"So I perceive: but, no matter, it is well for him that he has me for a father; his own has been careful of his welfare—careful, also, of that of his wife. So, I am to understand, that not only his own property, but, also, the fine

estate, I bestowed on you at marriage, has been dissipated at the gaming table?'

"I fear it is, indeed, too true!'

"True! aye, and more than this, he has set his villanous associates on me; as if he thought that I should be answerable for his vile profligacy.'

'I looked, as I felt, all astonishment. 'Creditors!' 'I exclaimed, there must be some mistake; for, before I left Paris, I sacrificed every thing, plate, jewels, all that I could call my own, to satisfy them; and I know of no claim remaining.'

"Nevertheless, I have been beset by some vile scoundrel, who shows bills to an immense amount in de Froulay's hand writing, and puts it to my honour to satisfy him—the villain!'

'I was thunderstruck—I ventured to hint that the bills might be forged.'

"That, be assured, I shall look well into; not that I intend to waste my substance

on a grovelling shark like that, but for the fellow's insolence. Could I convict him, he should rue the day he coupled the name of Tebaldi with dishonour! But, this is not to the purpose—what are your plans for the future?'

'Plans! I do not understand you!' I replied falteringly.

"What are your plans for the future I repeat? you are a beggar; the large fortune I bestowed with you on your spendthrift husband, has obliged me to retrench my expences in order that my future heir should have the suitable means of keeping up the dignity of his house. You must not, therefore, look to me for assistance, and, I repeat, you are a beggar!'

'Not a beggar!' I replied, 'for I have never yet received charity from any creature; neither will I, whilst I have health and strength. It is true, I never gave the loss of fortune a thought; it was not that that caused me a

pang; for I knew that I had a father, who was waiting, with open arms, to receive my son, and I did not think it possible that that father would refuse his own child, the mother of his heir, an asylum!'

"Ha! I thought so, I thought so!' and his stern brow relaxed, and the room echoed with his fiendish laugh. Then, fixing his fierce eye, which glared with demoniacal triumph, upon me, he continued, "My child? no, I own you not! Thy father? I renounced the title when *my boy*—my fine my brave boy—fell by the hands of your paramour—*murdered* through your disobedience, Thy father? no, I have since used you for my purpose; I did for you far more than you deserved. I gave you a husband—I gave you wealth—but I cursed you in my heart, and prayed that they would not bring you happiness. My prayer has been heard: my curse has descended upon you, and—I rejoice!'

'I could bear no more. I fell to the

ground. The loud shrieks of Ugo were the first sounds that recalled me to recollection. Tebaldi had tried to force him from me, but he clung to me with a tenacity that defied all attempts to separate us, and the tyrant, fearful of the consequences, resigned his efforts.

'As I slowly recovered, I found myself surrounded by the dear friends, who have shown me such kindness. Grace Shafton was supporting me, and whispering courage and consolation, and Tebaldi, not daring to show his dire malignity in their presence, withdrew, saying he would see me when I was more calm. He would have taken Ugo with him, but the moment he attempted to approach the child, he shook his little hand, clenched as though for vengeance, at him, and, shrieking loud, bade him begone, for that he hated him, and would never go with him!

'Tebaldi cast upon me a withering look, and saying, "We shall meet to-morrow!" left the apartment.

'The kind and excellent Grace did, and said, every thing to console and encourage me; but, my case is hopeless! She entreats, she implores me to take refuge with her; she offers me a sister's love, and would make me believe that her happiness depends upon it. But, oh! de Courcy to lose my boy, my darling, the only joy I have ever tasted in this my miserable existence!

'But, to continue, the morrow brought a letter from my father: its contents were what I expected. He bitterly reproached me for having alienated Ugo's affections from him; desired me to reconcile his mind, and prepare him to love him. Upon this condition, he will consent to allow me sufficient to enter one of the strictest convents in Italy; there, to expiate my sin of disobedience.

'What am I to do my friend? By immuring myself in a convent, I give up all hope of hereafter beholding my child, or of enjoying his society (at least, so my kind friends

reason): whereas, if I accept Miss Shafton's generous offer, and remain with her, I may look forward to a renewal of our intercourse at some future period. But will he not be taught to hate his mother, and, perhaps, before that period arrive, learn to look upon her with horror?

'Write to me, my friend. I would you could come to me, but I know duty, as well as affection, keeps you by the side of your sister. I have one week to consider and decide upon the course best to be pursued'—

'Addio—write to me!

'Your friend

'TERESA.'

"Is it possible," thought de Courcy "is it possible, that human nature can be so black? wretch, as I knew him to be, this passed my expectation. On the brink of the grave, he thinks only of ambition and revenge."

As he paused, reflecting on the unhappy fate of Teresa, de Froulay's letter struck upon his

memory. This man, then, who had applied to Count Tebaldi, was the very one whom de Froulay suspected of having defrauded him of nearly all his fortune. The more he thought upon the matter, the stronger became his desire to investigate it. There was little doubt of his being an imposter, but to detect him might be difficult, might be impossible; still, it was worth the trial. It was he, without doubt, who held the mortgages of de Froulay's estate, and of that also belonging to Teresa, which last, he had, most probably, come to dispose of. Yes, this was of too much importance to be neglected, but, his own presence was indispensibly necessary to the investigation.

How was he to leave his sister in her present state? True, the physicians had pronounced that she was better—that she might live some months, while, perhaps, his absence might extend only to a week, and her husband was hourly expected. Anxious and uncertain,

he folded the letter, and returned to his sister's room.

"Well, Ernest, I fear your letter has not brought you pleasing news."

He sat down by her, and, relating the circumstances, and pointing out the importance of the matter, asked her if she could spare him for a short time, that is if she really felt so much stronger as she had said, otherwise, he would give up the enterprise.

"On no account, my dear Ernest, on no account, give it up!" replied the Duchess, "If there be a possibility of saving some of the property, by the detection of this wretch, let not *me* be a consideration. God forbid, that, in attending upon so worthless a creature as I am, you should lose the opportunity of benefitting the amiable Teresa!"

De Courcy pressed her hand, "My dearest Augusta," he answered, "you are, at present, my first consideration; and nothing should induce me to leave you, if I thought that your

health would be, in the least, affected by my absence."

"Ernest, you have already given health and peace to my soul; a peace I never thought to have enjoyed—never could have conceived. For this frail body, I think it may hold together some time. So then, friendship, and the duty we owe to the suffering, command it! I shall pray for your success."

"Were Rinucci here." said de Courcy, still hesitating.

"Fear not, he will be here before the day is out. Besides, the distance is not great, and should I grow worse, I will instantly send for you."

"Thanks my dear Augusta! that promise decides me."

The Duchess was right—before the day closed, Rinucci arrived.

He seemed perfectly unconscious of the dangerous state of his wife's health, for, although the physicians had spoken of danger,

he had convinced himself that the genial climate of his native country would restore her. On learning from de Courcy that there was no hope, he was as much affected as such a man could be and promised neither to distress her by visitors, nor excitement of any kind.

If the duke felt an awe of any one living, it was of de Courcy; and the extreme solicitude the latter expressed about his sister's health, was likely to be attended with good effects.

Not that the duke would have neglected his wife; no, the very circumstance of her being *his* Duchess, was quite sufficient claim upon his attention. He might have made a kind—he never could have made an agreeable—husband; but, checked, in the onset of his matrimonial career, by the extreme coldness and hauteur of his wife, who treated him as though by having condescended to accept his hand, she had conferred on him the greatest possible honour, she had become an object of indifference, or rather of restraint.

Although he had no idea of his own deficiency, he, yet, quailed before her superiority. But, he was proud of her beauty and high birth, and, upon the whole, regretted that he was about to lose her.

The next day saw de Courcy on his way to Milan.

END OF VOLUME SECOND.

T. C. Newby, Printer, 65, Mortimer Street, Cavendish Sq

THE M.D.'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER I.

On de Courcy's arrival in Milan, he lost no time in seeking Teresa. He tried in vain to think only of her. He was again about to behold Grace, and the idea occupied his mind—it agitated, it unnerved him. He enquired if Mme. de Froulay were disengaged, and was immediately ushered into an apartment.

A lady was seated with her back towards the door. It needed not a second glance to convince the Earl that it was not Teresa; and, for a moment, he stood uncertain. Grace, for it was she, turned to salute the visitor. His

name had been so imperfectly announced, that it had escaped her ear. The start, the sudden flush of surprise, and the succeeding paleness, threw de Courcy off his guard. He eagerly advanced a few steps; but Grace, recovering her self-possession, received him with an air of such cold and distant politeness, that it instantly recalled his scattered thoughts.

"Pardon my intrusion, Miss Shafton; I sought Mme. de Froulay."

"Mme. de Froulay will, I know, esteem your visit as most kind. I will seek her, and inform her of your presence."

De Courcy made an almost involuntary effort to detain her. Here was the opportunity so ardently desired! Should he neglect it? Should he allow Grace Shafton to believe that his conduct had been actuated by caprice or inconstancy? No, he would seize the occasion of exculpating himself in her eyes.

"May I ask one moment?"

Grace's steps were arrested; she felt as

though her feet were chained to the floor. Her limbs trembled, and she feared that the beating of her heart must be audible.

De Courcy, seeing her agitation, approached to lead her to a seat; but, commanding herself by a sudden effort, she advanced and took the chair he had placed for her.

"It has long been my wish to have an interview with Miss Shafton, and, if it be not an intrusion on her time—"

Grace merely bowed in reply, and the Earl, in a voice in which pride and dejection appeared contending for mastery, continued:—

"I am well aware that I have nothing to hope! I know" and here his voice expressed great bitterness "that Miss Shafton has found no difficulty in forgetting one, who, though—"

Before he could finish the sentence, Teresa, who had been informed of his arrival, eager to welcome him, entered the room. Hastening towards him, and extending her hand with friendly warmth, she exclaimed:—

"My dear friend, my dear de Courcy, this is like yourself! How can I thank you?"

"By not attempting to do so; or, if you really wish to show your gratitude for the exertion of a few hours' drive, in order to see a friend, promise to be very good, and to follow the advice of those who are really interested in you."

Grace had taken the opportunity of quitting the room. So confused was she herself, that she scarcely observed the vexed and mortified expression visible on the Earl's countenance, at the unwelcome interruption.

"And," continued Teresa, "you have positively come to advise me? Indeed, I require it?"

"You must not say so. You are with those whose kind feelings and excellent sense render my presence, in that respect, needless. Still I hope to be useful to you likewise."

"Ah, you have ever been my kindest, best friend! But in this instance, I fear your in-

fluence will avail nothing. You know not what my father is: he is the most inflexible of men. Believe me, persuasion will be lost upon him."

"Of that I am well aware! That is, indeed, hopeless; neither do I think that, after what has passed—after such excessive barbarity as he has shown towards you, it would be possible for you to remain under the same roof with him."

"Ah, de Courcy, you know not what a mother could do! You know not what sacrifice she would make, in order to obtain the privilege of remaining with her child! I shall not long survive the separation." and, burying her face in her hands, she exclaimed in a tone of the deepest anguish, "Oh, my Ugo. my boy!"

The Earl took her hand. "Be consoled," he said, "and trust in the Almighty; he will not eventually deprive you of the blessing he has bestowed. Be calm!"

There was a slight pause, and when de Courcy thought Teresa sufficiently recovered, he asked in a low tone—

"Did de Frouhay leave other letters, besides the one to me?"

Mme. de Frouhay looked up. "Ah! if you had not left us, he would still be here!"

"I would, at least, have endeavoured to prevent his falling into the hands of an imposter. But it was not in my power to remain."

"You think then he was duped?"

"I have little doubt of it. Did he mention any particulars?"

"None whatever."

"And his private papers, what became of them?"

"Owing to Mr. Falkland's forethought, they are preserved. He collected and sent them away, on the very evening—the recollection of which, still makes me shudder. We heard, afterwards, that Von Betrug, the principal creditor, had made particular search after them."

"Then you have them with you?"

"Yes, I am almost sure they were packed in a small box. But, what is it you wish to know?"

"I can scarcely tell you at present. I wish to examine them. Will you confide these papers to my care? I have a particular reason for requesting it, which I will explain hereafter."

"Nay, there is no occasion for an explanation: it is sufficient that you wish to see them. I will have them sought for immediately."

"Thank you! and, as it is important that I commence my search at once, I will send for them—or perhaps you will dispatch them to me, for, now that I think of it, I am not going directly home."

"It shall be done. But, you are not thinking of leaving?"

"Yes, my time is precious. There is much to be done, and I am desirous of returning quickly. My poor sister will feel my absence."

"Most true; but you will return—you will see my kind friends?"

"Not to day. I will, however, see you as soon as possible. I truly rejoice that you have met with such excellent protectors."

"Oh! they are all goodness—I can never repay them! Miss Shafton has been more to me than a sister; she gives up all her time, and sympathises in my griefs, as though they were her own."

"Indeed?"—'And what does Falkland say to that?' almost arose to his lips. But he could not couple the name of Falkland with that of Grace. Bidding Teresa a hasty adieu, he departed.

He then directed his steps to the hotel, where the Count di Tebaldi had taken up his residence, and sent in his card, with a request to see that nobleman.

The Count, after glancing at the card, gave instant orders that Lord de Courcy should be ushered in, preparing to welcome him with every demonstration of respect and cordiality. In order to account for this condescension, it must be remembered that the late Earl's long

residence in Italy, together with the marriage of the Lady Augusta with the Duke di Rinucci, had made the name of de Courcy as well known abroad as it was highly respected.

De Courcy endeavoured to suppress his disgust, as the tyrant father of Teresa approached him; and replied to his compliments with due politeness. He took, however, an early occasion to mention the purport of his visit.

Tebaldi's brow contracted, as the Earl mentioned the name of de Froulay. But, as he proceeded, the cloud cleared away, and gave place to an expression of polite attention.

De Courcy carefully suppressed the hope he felt of being able to recover any of de Froulay's property, wisely judging that the Count would not aid him in an endeavour, which, if successful, would thwart his own views. He, therefore, spoke as though solely actuated by a desire of preserving the honour of his friend.

The Court appeared surprised at his solicitude, and remarked—

"I was not aware that M. de Froulay could boast of having a friend like Lord de Courcy."

"Pardon me, I have known him for some time; and, from a letter which I received since his death, and which, in fact, was written when he was about to enter into eternity, I have little doubt that he was a victim to the fraudulent practices of a villain. I learned, from Mme. de Froulay, that you have been applied to for the payment of bills given by her husband; and, instantly conjecturing that it must be the same audacious swindler, I have waited on you, to learn his name, and, if possible, expose and punish him."

The Count now lent a willing ear.

"Your visit," he remarked, "is most apropos. The name of the fellow is Von Betrug."

"Ha! I expected as much. It is the very same that de Froulay mentioned."

"That he is a scoundrel, I have not the least doubt. He has just favoured me with a visit,

and it was with some difficulty that I refrained from chastising his insolence."

"I am glad you did refrain. But, what are his demands?"

"The trifling sum of forty thousand francs."

"Besides what he has already possessed himself of. Upon my word, the fellow has a conscience!"

After much conversation on the subject, it was agreed that Tebaldi should keep Von Betrug in play, by giving him some hopes of getting the money, in order to afford de Courcy time to make the necessary researches. The plan of action being agreed upon, the Earl withdrew, having made a most favourable impression on the mind of the haughty Tebaldi.

De Courcy returned to his hotel, and commenced an eager investigation of de Froulay's papers. He examined one after the other, but nothing that could throw the least light on the matter appeared; and he began to despair. At last he opened a note from a M. de Seguy,

which immediately fixed his attention. It contained a friendly warning to de Froulay, with regard to Von Betrug.

'I have,' said the writer, 'reason to think that the name this fellow bears, is assumed; and believe him to be no more a German than I am. Beware of him! You have, already, I know, been a loser to no small amount. Do not be led away by the hope of regaining those losses. If my surmises be correct, you have no chance with him. I will, however, try and discover more, and should I be successful, will not fail to communicate with you.'

This note was dated only a few days previous to the one on which de Froulay had put an end to his existence.

"Miserable infatuation!" thought de Courcy, as he pondered over its contents. "Madman! after such a warning, thus to rush upon his ruin!"

What was now to be done? The information contained in the note, amounted to little

more than de Froulay's last letter afforded. De Seguy was well known to the Earl, as a wild, but honorable young Frenchman; and he had not a doubt as to the correctness of the information. Still, he had asserted nothing positive; and it was impossible to proceed on conjecture. These thoughts passed through his mind, as he slowly returned the papers into the box. He would immediately write to de Seguy: but, in the mean time, the rascal might escape. In throwing in the last few papers, one of them fell to the ground; and to his surprise, in picking it up, he saw that it was a letter, apparently in de Seguy's hand writing—the seal unbroken. He hastily opened it. It was, indeed, from de Seguy; and contained important information. In all probability, when de Froulay returned home that fatal evening, it was lying on his table; for it was dated the very same day. Unfortunately, it had been either unperceived or unheeded, for its contents would, assuredly, have stayed the

hand of the suicide. The contents were as follows:—

"My dear de Froulay,

"I am about to leave Paris for a week or two; but, before I do so, am happy in being able to inform you that Von Betrug is a cheat and an imposter. Whatever you may have lost to him, you will be entitled to recover; and I would strongly advise you not to lose any time in apprehending him. *M. Musnard, No. 5. rue Neuve des petits champs*, will be ready to appear as witness against him. He will give you all the information necessary to establish the turpitude of this scoundrel's conduct."

This was beyond de Courcy's hopes. He immediately despatched an express to Paris, with letters to de Seguy, and M. Musnard; begging that proofs and witnesses might be instantly forwarded to Milan. Mme. de Froulay being an Italian, and one of the estates, of which Von Betrug held the mortgage, lying in

Lombardy, there would be no difficulty in speedily apprehending him. In fact, de Courcy determined upon taking that step without delay, in case the affair should get wind, and the villain decamp.

Instantly returning to Tebaldi, he informed him that he had succeeded in obtaining the necessary information; and requested his advice as to the best method of proceeding.

"Tebaldi was delighted. His vengeful nature was gratified. He would have the opportunity of punishing one, who had dared to threaten him,—who had dared to mention the name of Tabaldi coupled with dishonor. He offered to accompany the Earl instantly to the authorities —his powerful name would at once claim attention.

This was no sooner done, than Tebaldi wrote to request an interview with the culprit. It was eagerly replied to. Von Betrug begging leave to wait upon the Count in the course of an hour.

All was prepared, and de Courcy, at the request of Tebaldi, awaited his arrival. He did not detain them, for, perfectly unsuspicious of detection, and already in imagination, grasping the gold, for which he would have bartered his soul, he hastened onwards, little thinking that he was about to receive the reward of his crimes.

De Courcy stood with his back to the door, and Von Betrug had already advanced into the middle of the apartment, before he turned to look upon him; when he did so, what was his astonishment to behold in the German Von Betrug,—the destroyer of his own peace—the cowardly and infamous Talbot!

When the latter recognised the Earl, he started with surprise and terror; and his face assumed a hue so livid, that it was like to nothing earthly. De Courcy kept his eye steadily fixed upon him, and it seemed to have the effect of that of the basilisk, for Von Betrug stood rooted to the spot.

Tebaldi gazed with surprise on his altered appearance, till Talbot, with a desperate effort roused himself. He avoided the Earl's eye, and walking quickly up to the Count, said,—

"I fear I have disturbed you Count. I am, perhaps, too early?"

"Not at all, Sir," replied the Count; but the tone and manner were not calculated to re-assure the other, "we, that is the Earl de Courcy and myself, awaited your coming."

Talbot's lips faded to the hue of his cheek, as he endeavoured to command his voice.

"I am not aware, "he observed, "that Lord de Courcy can have any thing to do in this affair; and I should think he scarcely wishes to enter upon those that are past. Should he desire so, however, I am quite ready to publish the whole matter."

The Earl answered him, with a look of contempt.

"You labour under a mistake in supposing that Lord de Courcy has nothing to do in this

affair, M. Von Betrug," remarked the Count, in a tone of cold irony." It is to his Lordship that I am indebted for much information concerning you."

Talbot bit his lip, clenched his hand, and appeared wavering between fear and rage—

"I am well aware what I am likely to expect from Lord de Courcy's generosity," he replied, in a tone of suppressed rage, "but let him beware—"

"I think, my good Lord," interrupted Tebaldi, turning towards de Courcy, "this worthy gentleman seems so kindly inclined to you, that, in order to provide for your safety, we will resign him to the care of those who may perhaps bring him into a more amiable temper." He then signed for those in readiness, to advance—"you will take this person into custody, upon the warrant already issued for his apprehension."

"Upon whose authority? upon what grounds?" demanded Talbot wildly.

"Upon the authority of the court; and upon the ground of having attempted to swindle me out of large sums of money."

"An attempt to swindle!" repeated Talbot with an unnatural laugh. "I defy you to prove it! Have I not shown you?—have I not your son's deed to prove my claim?"

"An illegal one."

"Illegal!—and is this the boasted honor of the house of Tebaldi? Nay, then, I have done! I told the Count Tebaldi, that the debt could not be *legally* claimed; I told him that it was to his honor that I appealed—and, certainly, if the head of that ancient house choose that the name of his son-in-law shall be dishonored—I have no claim upon him—I withdraw it!"

Tebaldi, boiling with rage, was about to dart upon Talbot, when de Courcy, who had hitherto been a silent spectator of the scene, now advanced; and, withholding the Count, thus addressed Talbot.

"The principal charge against M. Von Betrug, *alias* Talbot, is that of having defrauded the late Marquis de Froulay, out of several large sums of money; of procuring, alike fraudulently, mortgages upon his estates, and of attempting further to continue the fraud on the Count di Tebaldi. Murderer of de Froulay, hope not to escape!"

The moment de Courcy spoke, the manner of Talbot changed; his attempt at bullying was instantly dropped.

"Where are your proofs?" he asked, in a low hoarse tone.

"Fear not, both proofs and witnesses shall be forthcoming."

"And is this generous, in Lord de Courcy, thus to seek revenge? Would it not have been more so to have taken it, openly avowing the cause?"

"Until you entered the room, sir, I was ignorant of the identity of Mr. Talbot with the person of M. Von Betrug."

"Fie, my lord, it is unworthy of you to descend to a falsehood."

"I am not accustomed, Mr. Talbot, to have my word questioned; but to me, it is a matter of no importance, whether you choose to take it or not. Your disbelief will not alter the fact."

Without another effort, Talbot suffered himself to be led to the door; there, suddenly turning, he fixed a glance of fiendish malice upon the Earl, exclaiming—

"You have found me, oh mine enemy! Fool that I was, for allowing you so long to escape my vengeance! But, it will still come! Yes, I swore it, when last you heaped insults upon me: I swear it now!—and, mark me, Earl de Courcy, if I be disgraced, I will also be revenged."

"You know the man, then?" asked Tebaldi, as they led him off.

"To my great surprise, I recognised him the moment he entered; and know him to be capable of every thing that is diabolical."

"Well, I am really indebted for your exertions."

"Not at all, I am happy that it has been in my power to be useful. It is painful to reflect that poor de Froulay fell a victim to the arts of such a wretch."

"I shall think the better of my late son-in-law, from his having awakened such an interest in Lord de Courcy. To say truth, I hardly considered him worthy of the title of your friend."

The Earl shook his head, as he replied—

"His faults were indeed manifold; but, could that unfortunate love of gaming have been eradicated, there might have been hope of a permanent reformation, for, he was not devoid of good qualities. No one, however, could fail to be attracted by the sweetness and amiability of his wife, or interested for his young son."

"Ha," exclaimed Tebaldi, "his son: he does indeed promise well! Yes, I shall be at last repaid! His education shall be my chief duty."

"It has already been well begun, if I may

judge by what I have seen of him. He was his mother's principal care, who tended him most judiciously."

Tebaldi frowned, till his eyes were scarcely visible under the shade of his overhanging brows.

"Women's care!"—he exclaimed in a tone of contempt, "what can a woman know about the bringing up of a boy?"

"I think that, at his age, they are generally the best preceptors."

Tebaldi bent on him a keen and enquiring glance. Had it been another than de Courcy, he might have expressed his feelings openly; as it was, he merely replied.

"On this point we differ, my Lord!"

The Earl looked perfectly unconscious of having touched upon a delicate subject; and, soon after, took his leave.

CHAPTER II.

"WELL," exclaimed Mrs. Stanhope, in a tone of pique, when she heard of Lord de Courcy's visit to Mme. de Froulay, "the Earl is much changed. I remember the time, when he would not have been guilty of an incivility to an old friend! I dare say he never even enquired after me?"

"My dear madam," answered Teresa, imploringly, "you wrong him. He *did* ask for you; he is coming to see you, but is, even now, exerting himself in my behalf, though in what way I do not, at present, understand."

"It would, certainly, have taken up a great deal of his time, to have entered the adjoining

apartment, in order to pay his compliments," continued the offended lady.

"But he did not know you were so near; and, I am convinced, it is something very particular that engages his attention."

"O, 'tis no matter! Grace, my love," as the latter entered the room, "what ails you, you look pale and ill?"

"I am quite well, dear Madam."

"Then your looks belie you, for I have not seen you so pale and languid for some time."

Grace made an attempt to smile.

"Looks will sometimes deceive."

"No, no, you confine yourself too much."

"And all on my account, selfish that I am!" exclaimed Teresa. "But I will allow it no longer! No, dear Grace, you must not let sympathy for me cloud your own brighter lot. Alas! my unhappy fate saddens all whom I approach. I will not, however, much longer intrude my sorrow upon you."

"I meant not that, my dear Mme. de Frou-

lay;" cried Mrs. Stanhope, "neither will we consent to part with you. No, you must remain with us! I should have Grace looking still more pale, were you to leave us: and, besides, whither would you go? You will not, surely, consent to the unnatural wish of an unnatural parent. And then, to bring forward a selfish motive, how could Grace bear the loss of two friends; for, you are aware that we must soon part with Lucy?"

"Thank you, dear Madam, for pleading my cause!" said Grace affectionately.

"And my own at the same time. No, we will not hear of a separation; that is positive! But, listen to a plan of mine. I am anxious, my dear Grace, that you should enjoy some little tranquillity; and, as the weather is almost too warm to allow of our proceeding farther south, I propose that we pass the remainder of the sultry season by the Lake of Como. Falkland tells me that he has heard of a most charming villa to be let there. What say you,

Grace? Shall we take it? The climate is most genial, the calm of a few weeks spent there, will, I think, do you good. We can then proceed to Rome, where we will spend the winter."

"I leave it entirely to you, my dear friend; and shall best like whatever is most agreeable to you."

"It is, no doubt, very delightful," replied Mrs. Stanhope, "to be told to do as one likes in every thing; but the very circumstance of getting one's way so easily, destroys half the pleasure attending it; a little opposition renders a thing so agreeable when achieved. Now, you give me none, Grace: you really are too indifferent."

"I will try then and get up an objection," said Grace, smiling.

"Do, I entreat you; not only that I may have the pleasure of overcoming it, but to convince me that you resemble other people in some things. Now, there's Lucy, she starts a

thousand objections to every thing I propose; or, if the proposal happen to suit her wishes, she is all ecstasy!"

"Well, since I fear I should find it difficult to start an objection to your plan, I will be very, very ecstatic, for I am sure I shall enjoy the tranquillity of such a retreat amazingly."

"Oh! you look very ecstatic indeed, my dear Grace. However, we will consider the matter as settled," and away bustled the kind lady, who had talked herself into her usual good humour, which de Courcy's fancied neglect had somewhat ruffled.

The week which Tebaldi had allowed Teresa for consideration, and during which she was to prepare the mind of her son for a separation, had now nearly elapsed. As the day approached, the spirit of the doting mother became deeply troubled; her face wore a painful anxiety, and the trembling of her lip showed her terror of the bitter trial. Her tears flowed unceasingly, and every day seemed to endear the boy more

and more to her heart. It was in vain that Grace exhausted every argument, in endeavouring to console her; her endeavours were thrown away. Teresa was grateful for her kindness, but she was inconsolable at the idea of being obliged to give up her child.

"Mama," said the child one day, escaping from Grace, who had been amusing him in another part of the room, "why are you always crying? and why does papa never come back? I want to go to Paris, for there, you did not cry, and papa is there, and we had no frightful old man, to say naughty things to you, and make you ill."

"Hush, my boy, you have no papa now; he is dead!"

"Dead?"

"Yes, Ugo, he is gone away from this world altogether."

"And shall we never see him again?"

"There is another world beyond this, Ugo, where, if people be good, they shall meet again, and be happy."

"Then, we shall see him again, for papa was good, and you are, oh! so good, mama, and I will try and be good too; so, leave off crying, mama. If he be happy, why do you cry?"

"Because I must part with you, Ugo."

"You shall not—I will go with you!"

"Alas! my child, you must go to your grandpapa, who is your only papa now."

"But you will go too?"

"I cannot!"

"And who is my grandpapa?"

"The gentleman you saw the other day. You must try and love him, and he will be kind to you."

"What gentleman, what gentleman, mama, —Mr. Falkland?"

"No, Ugo, you called him frightful old man just now, which you must not do; *he* is your grandpapa."

"My grandpapa!" exclaimed Ugo, looking aghast—"then I will never go to him, I will not, I will die first!"

Teresa burst into tears, and Grace, taking

Ugo to the window, began to talk and reason with him, saying every thing she thought most likely to reconcile his mind to what she knew was inevitable; but, although he appeared to understand her perfectly well, he continued to repeat, in the most decided manner, "I will never go! I will die first!"

At this moment Lord de Courcy was announced, and Ugo, rushing towards him, threw himself into his arms, and, in his joy at seeing his old favourite, forgot all his affliction.

Teresa, drying her eyes, advanced to meet him; and Grace, with a distant bow, was about to quit the room, when she was prevented, by Madame de Froulay exclaiming—

"Do not go, Grace! De Courcy has no secrets to communicate, or, if he have, you shall be a sharer. Besides, I intend making him umpire between us. Will you agree?"

"Most, willingly," replied Grace, "for, I shall be much mistaken if Lord de Courcy decides against me."

"And why, pray?"

The question, though simple, embarrassed Grace; but rallying, she replied—

"Only, because I think mine the better cause."

"The kinder, I am sure, if not the better," replied Teresa. Then, turning to de Courcy, "This dear girl offers me a sister's place in her heart, and a sister's part of her fortune; and is angry with me for refusing her generosity."

De Courcy looked at Grace; he would have given worlds that he might have pressed her to his heart. The ardent gaze of love and admiration brought the bright colour to her cheek.

"It is like her," he exclaimed, "is is just what I should have expected from—Miss Shafton."

"Why will you," said Grace, seriously, "why will you make so much of that, which, in itself, is valueless? Have you not already accepted the first part of my offer? have you not given me your friendship and affection in return for

mine? and, surely, you will not compare the value of the affections with the poor advantages of fortune?"

"I would not, indeed, Grace; for, be assured, your affection is to me of more value than great riches."

"Then why make it a question? have I not enough for both?"

"Indeed," interrupted de Courcy, who had been a silent, though not uninterested, observer, "I think, Madame de Froulay, you do your friend an injustice. To hesitate, is unworthy of your own noble nature."

"Ah, I see that Grace has bribed you! But, still, there is a consideration of which neither of you have thought. Miss Shafton may offer me a permanent asylum, with the privilege of sharing her friendship; for, as to fortune, you, de Courcy, know me too well, to suppose I either value it, or would accept it, even from Grace Shafton: but, can I expect that she will always remain Miss Shafton?

"You, de Courcy! how so?"

"By a lie, a foul lie, which he imposed upon me, and which I afterwards learned was invented solely for my destruction—but I discovered that too late. I was already its victim!"

As he said this, he raised his eyes to Grace; hers were fixed upon him with a look of agitated enquiry. She longed to hear more, but Teresa interrupted him, by asking—

"And what did the wretch say, when he saw you?"

"Oh, when he found that I had detected him, he threatened me with vengeance."

"I am glad he is in custody!" observed Teresa. "There is no knowing what revenge might dictate to a mind so base."

Grace looked as though she fully agreed with Teresa. "The latter then continued—

"But, Tebaldi, what does he say? does he know all this?"

"He does, but he is far from imagining that the restoration of your fortune depends upon

this man's arrest; neither do I wish him, for the present, to know it. He thought me actuated, solely, by the motive of saving de Froulay's honor, and, as that was, decidedly, partly the case, I did not think fit to undeceive him. When you send him your final decision, which will, of course, negative his desire of immuring you in a convent, be careful not to mention this matter; it will be sufficient to say, that, for a time, you remain with your friends."

"I will, my dear friend; and now, if you have nothing more to say to me, let us adjourn to the next room, for Mrs. Stanhope will be quite offended; indeed, you have already got into disgrace with her."

"Have I?" said de Courcy, "then I must hasten and make my peace."

This, he soon effected, for he was a great favourite with Mrs. Stanhope; but he resisted her importunities to stay and dine. It was in vain that she urged; he pleaded particular business, and she was obliged to give up the point.

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"I wonder," remarked Teresa to Grace, when they were again left alone, "what it is that has caused de Courcy's unhappiness? For the last two years, I have noticed the deep melancholy that possesses him, and, to-day, he owned that his happiness had been blighted."

Grace merely assented.

"I did think, Grace, when I first saw you, and, still more, when I began to know you, that you and de Courcy were formed for each other; you have the same high and generous feelings, the same cultivated intellect. But you do not appear to like him; you are cold and reserved in his presence — in fact, you are scarcely yourself."

"I was not aware!" replied Grace, busily employed in looking for something in her work table, "I am sorry that you should have observed any difference."

"Can it be possible," persisted Teresa, "that you do not admire him?"

Grace's innate love of truth was put to a

severe test: she could not say that she did not admire him.

"Yes, I esteem his character extremely."

"And his person, is, surely, uncommonly prepossessing? eminently so, I think."

"Certainly; but you are mistaken in supposing I have any dislike to him: it is a mere fancy of yours."

"Perhaps so, I am sure he does not dislike *you*! I never saw a look of such intense admiration, as that he gave you this morning."

Grace blushed, deep enough to have convinced even Mrs. Miles Stanhope that she was not, upon all points, so *very* indifferent; but her succeeding paleness was still more remarkable, as she replied,—

"And that reminds me that I have to scold you for lauding me so unnecessarily, and compelling praise from an indifferent person."

"My dear Grace, you forget he is my dearest friend; and, as for *compelling* praise or admiration, this is not the first time I have observed

that de Courcy admires you, though, for some reason or other, he either wishes to conceal, or is fearful of indulging it."

"My dear Teresa, *you* are indulging in chimeras!"

"Possibly so, but yet Lucy says, he gave an immense sum for a picture, which strongly resembled you."

"Lucy fancied the picture resembled me; but did she not tell you, that it was a most exquisite work of art?"

"But I have seen him admire enthusiastically many exquisite works of art, purchaseable too, and yet, he never bought them."

"There is no accounting for people's fancies; the matter is scarcely worth a thought, and as for what Lucy says, her head is so full of romance, that she fancies an adventure in the slightest incident."

"Truly," cried Lucy, who had entered the room unperceived, during the latter part of this speech, "truly, I have come just in time to

protect my character. Pray, may I ask what gave rise to that most false assertion?"

"Only—" replied Teresa.

"Nay," interrupted Grace, "pray let us choose some more interesting subject; and, as for Lucy, I will convict her of romance ten times a day."

"Have a care, Grace, or I will have my revenge. I have a little secret of my own, which, if you do not behave very prettily, I will divulge."

"Well," replied Grace, laughing, "if it be your own secret, no one will complain of you."

"Not my own secret, but one of my own discovering."

"I declare," observed Grace, as she rose to leave the room, "that Falkland's absence (he had gone to Como, to engage the villa, already mentioned,) has given Lucy time to think of new discoveries. There is no knowing what important ones may be forthcoming."

Falkland returned the next day, having suc-

ceeded, to his satisfaction, in his errand. It was, therefore, settled that they should remove from Milan the ensuing week.

This was the last day that Teresa would pass with her dear boy, and her friends began to wish the trial of parting over.

Falkland advised, that, instead of again seeing her father, which would only be a renewal of the late angry scene, she should write her determination.

She did so. In firm, though respectful, terms, she told him that whatever might be her ultimate decision, she had determined, for the present, not to accept the alternative proposed by him. The kindness of her English friends provided her with an asylum for any length of time she might choose to accept; but, even were it not so, rather than be *forced* against her inclination to take refuge in the cloister, she would work with her own hands for her support.

"I will not," said Teresa, in a sad tone, "recommend my boy to his care, it would be

the means of alienating his love; better that he should forget who gave him birth!"

"Do not fear for Ugo;" observed Falkland, "for his own sake, he will bring him up with care and tenderness."

"Yes, and teach him to hate his Mother."

"It is not so easy to eradicate, in a boy of his age, such an affection as Ugo bears you."

"Better that he should forget, should hate me, rather than sorrow for me; for that would not only cause his own unhappiness, but would draw upon him the rage and indignation of his cruel relation."

At last, the trying moment came; for, on the following day, Tebaldi sent his equipage and attendants to fetch Ugo. One of the latter brought a message, the import of which was, that, if found necessary in order to reconcile the boy to the change, his nurse might accompany him.

Gladly did Mme. de Froulay avail herself of this permission, to send with him the faithful

Louise. With bitter tears did she implore her to find some means of sending her news of her child, "speak to him," she said, "sometimes of his mother; but endeavour to reconcile him to his new abode. Commend him, with my earnest love and affection, to my mother."

Many, and reiterated, were the charges of this description. Grace, and Mrs. Stanhope, earnestly entreated her to command her feelings before the boy, and not to take leave of him as if their separation were to be of any duration.

The moment that Ugo saw the strange equipage and servants, and found that he was to go out without his mama, he stoutly refused to depart.

Trying, in the extreme, was the scene which followed. Generally docile, and amenable to reason, the boy, on this occasion, was positive and intractable. He first screamed violently, then sobbed and entreated, and, finally, when he found his efforts unsuccessful, he sank into

ɔorness, and seemed deter-
ıis little heart should burst, not
ɔther tear.

.e. de Froulay, perfectly overcome, fell
.o violent hysterics, and Falkland, taking the boy in his arms, for he seemed determined that no voluntary motion should effectuate his exit, carried him away and entered the carriage with him, endeavouring to reconcile his mind, and, if possible, to bring him into a more docile temper.

But it was in vain that he pointed out whatever he thought would attract his attention. He remained perfectly inattentive and silent, except once, when, looking at Falkland steadily, he said:—

"I will not live with that strange and wicked old man, who made mama cry so, and almost killed her. I will die and go to papa, and mama will die too; I will not stay with him!"

When the carriage drew up at the hotel,

where Tebaldi lodged, Ugo would not descend of his own accord, and Falkland, again taking him in his arms, carried him into the house. Tebaldi, who had come eagerly forward, stopped short upon seeing Falkland, and, with his haughtiest air, seemed to await an explanation of his presence.

Falkland, with equal hauteur, apologised for his intrusion, adding that though every means had been tried to pacify Ugo, and reconcile his mind to the separation from his mother, he had felt obliged to accompany him, hoping his influence might check the child's grief.

Tebaldi replied by an inclination of the head, and an expression of countenance, in which pride and defiance seemed to bear equal part; and Falkland, seeing him determined upon silence, embraced Ugo, whom he left standing sullen and reserved, and departed.

It was some time, ere Teresa was sufficiently recovered to open the note, which had accompanied the escort for Ugo. It merely said—

"You have made your determination, I also have made mine. You prefer living upon the charity, extended to you by foreigners and strangers, to the secure and honourable retreat I point out; in so doing, you bid farewell to your son for ever. He shall never know a mother, for whom, he has reason to blush."

Although Mme. de Froulay had anticipated the result of her determination, yet she was so overcome by the perusal of this stern and cruel expression of Tebaldi's malice, that it required all the attention and reasoning of her friends, to restore her to composure.

"Better," she exclaimed, "better to have obeyed his mandate! Then, I should, perhaps, have been permitted sometimes to behold my child."

"Do not fancy it," replied Lucy, "he never intended it, and only says this out of malice. No, you have cheated him."

"I think Lucy is right," said Mrs. Stanhope, "and that you stand a much greater chance of

being reunited to him, at some future period, than had you taken the veil."

"Did he not," said Lucy, "express his hatred and malice to you? Why, then, will you cheat yourself into a belief, that any submission could soften his unjust and unnatural resentment?"

All agreed in the same sentiment, and, at last, Teresa became more calm.

In the evening, as the little party were assembled, de Courcy was announced. He had scarcely ever beheld Falkland and Grace together, and the sight was painful, beyond what he could have imagined. Had he observed the slight edging away of chairs, which took place between Lucy and Falkland, who, before his entrance, had been seated, lover-like, at no considerable distance from each other, he might have felt more agreeably disposed.

He took his seat by Teresa, without once directing his eyes towards Grace, except during the mere recognition that politeness required.

After some conversation, Falkland enquired if anything had yet been decided about Talbot.

"I have," answered de Courcy, "this morning, received a communication from the fellow, in which he offers to give up the bonds and mortgages he holds, provided I will consent to see him, and give him my promise not to expose him further."

"What do you intend to do?" asked Falkland.

"Oh! I will see him, and hear what he has to say! But, of course, cannot decide, without seeing the Count di Tebaldi."

"Do not, do not, see him!" exclaimed Grace. The suddenness, and the earnestness of her manner, surprised all; and, checking herself, she continued, more quietly, "you must remember, Lord de Courcy, the threats, he held out to you; you, surely, will not trust yourself in the power of one, who, without doubt, meditates revenge?"

De Courcy had looked up to thank Grace, but, seeing that she was embarrassed by his

eager and enquiring glance, he withdrew his eyes, and replied.

"There can be no fear. What could he possibly do to me? You forget he is a prisoner, and has, of course, been deprived of any arms that he might have had about him."

"I feel convinced," observed Teresa, "that Grace is right, and I shall insist that you do not run any risk on my account. Pray, do not go!" she added, seeing the smile that played around his mouth.

"We must carry it by vote;" answered de Courcy, laughing, "for I see there are those present, who, by their smiling demeanour, do not participate in your alarm. What say you, Falkland, would you have me fear to encounter this terrible monster?"

"I think it would be no easy matter to make you fear," replied Falkland, "but I confess I see no great danger in visiting a criminal in his cell."

It was plain that Lucy and Mrs. Stanhope agreed with Falkland, but Grace remarked:—

"There are some things we fear as if from a

natural instinct, and, I confess, without being able to point out any particular danger that may threaten Lord de Courcy, I feel that the only motive this man can have for desiring to see him, is to aim at vengeance. From what I have heard of him, he is capable of the greatest crimes."

"I shall ever be obliged for your kind interest, Miss Shafton, and, believe me, I will be upon my guard."

Teresa still continued her protestations, but Grace said no more, and the subject was dropped. She saw that de Courcy was determined, but she did not know that his principal inducement was a hint, thrown out by Talbot, that he could be the means of renewing that happiness, which he had destroyed. It is true, de Courcy felt the absurdity of such a declaration, but an undefined feeling, which, without taking the trouble to analyse, he denominated curiosity, determined him to grant the interview.

"Have you," asked Mrs. Stanhope, "heard of the Duchess?"

"Yes, she is, I understand, much the same as when I left her; but I am most anxious to return, and, as this affair is likely to take up some time, I mean, to-morrow, after my interview, to be on my way to Como."

"And," remarked Teresa, "we shall be very near you. I am delighted at that, for we shall, I hope, see you often?"

"As often as my sad duty will allow. But, I have not the slightest hope of my sister's recovery, and am unwilling to lose the little remaining time I can spend in her society."

"How sad, how melancholy," exclaimed Grace, with tearful eyes, "so short a time since and I beheld her young and lovely!" In contemplating the dying bed of the sister of de Courcy, she forgot the hatred with which that sister had regarded her—she forgot all, except that she was ill, dying.

The remembrance of her own irreparable loss came fresh to her recollection, and, overcome by her feelings, she buried her face in her hands.

There was a pause, for all felt the chord that had been touched in the heart of Grace. Her words, and manner sank deeply into de Courcy's breast, and it was some time ere he could trust himself to speak.

"I must not," he said, rising to take his leave, "infect you with my sad thoughts."

Grace retired to bed, with a heart unusually oppressed. The memory of her beloved parent, though never absent, came oppressively strong upon her. This had been a trying day. Teresa's sorrows, and the melancholy parting between mother and son, had affected her spirits. Then, the strange mystery that hung over her own intercourse with de Courcy—twice had he made an effort to speak to her alone, each time that effort had been thwarted. She had noticed the glance of sad intelligence he fixed upon her, when he spoke of the deceit Talbot had practised upon him; she had seen his look of gratified feeling, when she had expressed her desire that he should avoid the coming inter-

view with that wretch. Many things tended to convince her that he still loved, but that some unaccountable circumstance separated them. If a mere deceit, why did he not explain it? Tormented by these thoughts, it was long ere she fell asleep, and, then, it was to dream of de Courcy, and of de Courcy surrounded by dangers.

CHAPTER IV.

THE next morning, Larry, who had heard of his lord's intended visit to Talbot, fidgetted in and out the room, and although his master had twice told him that he had no further occasion for him, he seemed extremely loth to depart. Being at last obliged to withdraw, he went no farther than the antechamber, where he still lingered. As the Earl was about to leave the house in order to proceed to the prison, he was interrupted by Larry, who with many bows and infinite apologies, thus addressed him.

"My lord, I humbly ask your pardin, if it's presumin' upon privelege you'll think me, but it's the liberty of axin' a great partiklar favour, I'm intinding."

"Speak, Larry, what is it? you know I'm in haste now."

"That's what I'm bearin' in mimory, your honour; and, my lord, I hope you've always found me obadjent and anxious to plase you, and attintive to your lordship, an' rispictful, as in duty bound."

"All of these, Larry, and far more than your modesty will permit you to repeat; I need not again say, that you have to tell me only how I *can* repay you for your services."

"Yerra, whisht my lord! sure a Dromore pig, stupid an' aggravatin' as he is by natur, would arouse himself from his lithirgy to oblige so kind and noble a masther as your lordship, Heaven ward the danger from you, amin! But, my lord, I aint asy in my mind at all this black Friday, for there's a somethin' a throublin' o' me about this necissity of your honor's goin' to the prison; so," (seeing an expression of impatience on his master's face) "I inthrate you to lit me go for you, and fetch you the informa-

tion from this parjurin' tief; for it's an imprission at my heart I have, aginst your thrustin' yourself with him."

"Tush, my good fellow, that is impossible! You must choose something that will advantage yourself, for I cannot grant you this."

"An' why not my lord,—if a crather like myself may make so bowld as to ask a manin' out of your lordship?"

"Why, in the first place, Larry," and de Courcy could not help smiling, though he felt affected by the poor fellow's earnest anxiety for his safety. "I have given my promise to go, and in the next, you could not answer the purpose. A promise is sacred."

"Promise, my lord! that all dipinds on the nathur o' the conditions. An' sure, there's a lagal allowince always for excusin' yourself, in case your lordship was taken ill—which Heaven divert! or in case your honour were inclined to yield a faviour to your faithful and humble sarvint, which Heaven above grant! an' my

lord, if you lave it to my managemint, I'll go bail your honour shan't suffer in parsin, property, or characther."

"I do not doubt that, Larry, but I am afraid that neither of your reasons are sufficiently powerful to admit of my breaking my promise. Come, my good fellow, you must waive this request! ask anything that will advantage you, but this is a matter both of importance and interest to me."

"Ax me to die, ax me anything possible, unpossible, or extravagint, an' the curse of a whole kindred be upon me, if I fight shy! but *I'm* aqually interested in this matter, my lord, an' I humbly enthrate your honour to oblige me. Look, my lord, look, how that baste of a squintin' cat is attimptin' to look sthrate at your lordship! Holy Mother! an' hark to Faithful, he's howlin' his sowl out."

"Your anxiety, Larry, to prevent my going has, I am sorry to tell you, a contrary effect; for, now, it would be doubting my courage, to

suppose that a few old woman's signs should deter me."

"Look at that now!" exclaimed Larry, forgetting everything in his astonishment at the Earl's speech, "courage! Is it doubting your lordship's courage I am? Oh! thin, where's the bockedy* furriner of 'em all would say that to me? By the light of Heaven, I'd brain and embowel him in no time! Pardin me, my lord, but I'm out this mornin': the pain is in my heart, an' small wonder if the vixation is on my tongue. My lord, you won't go, surely you won't risk it?"

"I am sorry to deny you, Larry," replied de Courcy, almost tired of his servant's pertinacity, "any thing that can serve you, you have but to ask— it is yours!"

"Thank you, my Lord," said Larry, in an altered tone, "thank you! I'm bound to your lordship, in life certainly, and in death, by—"

Larry's 'clincher,' as he termed an oath, was

* Cripple.

lost by the sudden elevation of Faithful's voice in a howl of hideous import.

"It' o' no mortial use your goin' on in that fashin, Faithful, avich," continued Larry, suppressing his fear, "howld in the breath, for blowin' your fingers, alannan! Your lordship will take a pistil by coorse?"

"No, certainly not!"

"Very well, my Lord," and Larry immediately furnished himself with a tolerably decent twig.

"And, whilst I am away Larry, you will prepare for our departure."

"That's already done, my Lord, no fear; but I'll be ready; but, jist now, I've nothin' in the world to do but to attind on your lordship."

"My good fellow, I do not require your attendance."

"I can't agree to that my lord," replied Larry determinedly, "I aint obligated for to shtay at home whin my masther is bein' murthered—that would be all's one as if I were

a sleepin' agint in the business. My lord," he continued, seeing his master was about to oppose his determination, "if you go, I'm bound sowl an' body to go too."

"I see you are bent on displeasing me this morning."

"God forbid, God forbid, your lordship should be displeased; but, your honour it's idle spakin': I'll folly you, if you thrample me to death for it."

De Courcy saw that it was in vain to contend; so, without further words, they proceeded to the prison.

When de Courcy entered the cell, in which Talbot was confined, notwithstanding the sign he made to Larry to remain without, that determined and attached follower thrust himself eagerly in after him, slipping a bribe into the turnkey's hand aud signing to him to shut the door upon them. Not feeling any inclination for another scene with him, de Courcy, although much vexed, took no further notice, and turned towards Talbot.

The latter regarded him, for a few seconds, in silence; then, passing his hand across his eyes, as though he would be certain that it was really he, he shaded them from the light, and again keenly contemplated him.

This done, he arose from the miserable pallet on which he was seated.

"My lord," he began, "you have done well and wisely, in granting me this interview. I have that to say, however, which is suited only to your own ear; therefore, unless you desire the *protection* of your servant, to secure you against the attempts of a poor prisoner, who is wholly in *your* power, I would advise that he withdraw."

"Larry," said de Courcy, in a tone that the former had never ventured to dispute, "retire —await me outside."

"Asy, asy, my lord, I can't get out—nor I wouldn't if I could."

"How, sir, do you dare to disobey my orders?"

"I'm feared, my lord, I must for this onct;

for, as I hope for salvation, I'll niver lave you though you kill me: an' that's as good as said!" and he set his back firmly against the door.

"Well, sir, this is the last time you shall have the opportunity of disobeying my commands. You have lost my good opinion for ever!"

"I'm sorry for it, my lord, but I'm inflixitive!"

De Courcy turned to Talbot. "It is of no consequence, we can converse in Italian, of which he understands not a word."

"He has been well schooled," observed Talbot with a sneer.

De Courcy's eyes flashed fire. "Proceed sir," he exclaimed, in a stern voice.

Talbot grinned maliciously as he replied,—"I am fully aware, my lord, of the misunderstanding, which I, so unfortunately, was instrumental in producing, between yourself and Miss Shafton; a misunderstanding amounting, as I now learn, to a total alienation and forfeitture of faith; Ned Falkland being about to make sure of the game. By the light, I hold

it a grievous, a monstrously grievous balk. D—n it to think that, when the noble falcon has made his *stoop*, and *raked* his *quarry*, this vile finch should *carry* the prey. I do call that a mortification!"

De Courcy, anxious, as he had been, to hear what Talbot might have to say on this subject, could neither endure the tone nor manner with which he touched upon it. The one bespoke bitter irony, the other the gloating of satisfied revenge.

"I did not come here, sir, to hear your comments upon an event which your own villany has caused; neither will I permit you to make them. Proceed, if you please, to the communication which you yourself expressed a desire to make, or I withdraw, and leave justice to take it's course. Proceed, sir, to Mme. de Froulay's affair."

"You came to be gratified, my lord, in a dungeon!—'tis a cheerless nest to suggest such a hope, and the men that are cooped in it do

not see much to incite them to render those, who are happy enough in being free, an addition to that happiness. But, my lord, if I willingly make this sacrifice—for sacrifice it will be—the least I expect is that I may be allowed to do it after my own fashion."

"Certainly, sir, provided my private affairs do not enter into the transactions now to be discussed between us, as they are not to the point."

"That is as your lordship thinks, but, I confess, I am of a contrary opinion. My offer of affording you a great gratification, in a matter peculiarly interesting to your lordship (wherefore I do not care to question—any one that has seen Mme. de Froulay, will give your lordship credit for good taste), but, as I said, I consider myself entitled, under the circumstances, to speak upon any subject which may repay me for the pleasure I bestow. Therefore it is my pleasure that our conversation turn first upon your lordship's having been jilted by this girl."

"What do you mean, sir? How dare you mention Miss Shafton's name with disrespect? Have a care, or I will instantly punish you."

"Pooh, my lord, a woman is a woman; and, in youth, we call her girl! I speak physiologically."

"Come, sir, at once to your communication respecting Mme. de Froulay."

"There again, I may say what I like of her! yet she is a pretty creature also. But, my lord, you are hard upon me. It is only to mention the name of Miss Shafton, and it would seem the speaker is uttering darts, or rather enigmas. At school, you know, we have it—'My first a bold archer shot out of a bow'—I should say 'shot out at a *beau*.' Ha, ha, ha. What think your lordship of the enigma?"

"Vile wretch, do not think to move me. I understand you!"

"Indeed, I scarcely gave your lordship credit for so much penetration."

"Your desire is to irritate me. Be warned!"

"You are not far wrong there, my lord!" he muttered aside. "So, then, this Grace Shafton, this miracle of—"

"Rascal!" cried de Courcy, losing for a moment all self-command, and springing upon Talbot.

"Fool! here's at you!" cried the latter, and discharged a pistol. De Courcy reeled, and fell to the earth.

Larry, who, though apparently employed in counting the heads of the nails in the door of the dungeon, had, in fact, never for a moment kept his eagle glance from the speakers, now, uttering a fearful yell, rushed upon Talbot. He was not in time to avert the aim of the pistol; but, ere the assassin could pull the trigger of another, which he held to his right temple, with the intention of self-destruction, Larry had "surrounded" him. A short scuffle ensued, in the midst of which the remaining pistol went off.

"Death and devils, ruffian, let go your hold!" cried Talbot.

"You've kilt *him*, you thraitor, and I'll be like your God upon you!" roared Larry.

After a desperate attempt on the part of Talbot to release himself, and a still more desperate one on the part of Larry to prevent his doing so, they rolled together to the ground; Larry agile as a 'cluricaun,' was upon his adversary's body in a twinkling. Half kneeling, like the peasantry at mass, his bent leg on Talbot's chest, his right hand clenching the cravat,—himself presenting the abstract power of energy in action,—he began seriously to "kill, kill, kill."

"Mercy, mercy," gasped the now powerless criminal, "mercy!"

"Silence, do!—I haven't it in me—you've kilt *him!*"—and he gave the kerchief a frightful twist.

In the agony of the moment, Talbot's body writhed convulsively, and one of his arms was raised in the air, his eyes staring up hideously in Larry's face, suggesting to the latter the idea of a choking toad.

"Viper," he growled, "I'll tap your venim for you!" and he busied himself to keep his word.

At this moment, the jailer and turnkeys, alarmed by the noise of fire-arms, rushed in, and flew to interrupt Larry. The latter, giving what he thought, a finishing wind, and seeing the blood gush from the mouth and nostrils of his victim, arose resignedly, exclaiming—

"He'll do now, I'll go bail!"

He then turned to his master, and having raised him from the ground, and for a moment gazed in his face, burst into an agony of grief, and lamentation.

"Oh, Christ! that I should live to see you, cut down, tall tree of the mountain, in the green spring of youth, with the laves and the moist fruit a buddin' about you; ere the frost nipped, or the aist wind blew, or the thunder bowlt obsarved you. Well, well, I've rivinged you; I've made your murderer a red bed of death! How cowld you are, sowl of my sowl, how pale

an' how powerless; but there's enough on your cheek to say what's the matther with you. Oh, God, God everywhere, high, and full o' sight, why did you let this happen? Sure you can scarce spare the benivolent out o' the hard world. Ah, masther, lover, an' frind, you were the summer o' my sowl, an' the light o' my eye! but the winter's rushed in, an' the darkness is about me; an' now, God knows, I don't care when the cowld grave has me. Oh, de Coorcy, de Coorcy, pride of the height and the valley; son of the strong hand, and the swift foot—of the hand that was swifter to heal than to wound, and the foot that was quicker to the rescue than the strife. But your name shall be alive in our spirits, an' we'll sing, in the mild evenin' the vartues o' de Coorcy! And the lady that'll die when the sun is a settin'—die for the haro' of her fancy—we'll put ye both in our ballads, an' tache the story to the childer! But—whisht a bit—arrah, whisht! Powers o' Paradise, he's livin' agin—joy, joy for iver, he's come back to

us. Here, I say, you steel-phizzed baboon, lind a hand, an' help me to carry his lordship out o' this din o' blood; an' you, you ugly spalpeen, run do, an' call me a coach in as little time as a monkey takes thinking."

The governor of the prison, who had now made his appearance, seemed exceedingly concerned at what had happened, and did all in his power to further Larry's efforts to get de Courcy immediately home. The Earl had opened his eyes once, but, faint from loss of blood, soon closed them again.

Talbot was not dead, and the governor tried to make Larry understand that he should immediately put him in irons.

In a few minutes, a carriage was in waiting, into which de Courcy was carefully lifted.

CHAPTER V.

When Grace descended the next morning, Mrs. Stanhope anxiously observed her pale and dejected countenance. She really loved her as her own child; and, as she looked upon her fragile form, and noted her delicate appearance, she sighed with regret and uneasiness. She began to deplore that Mme. de Froulay had joined their family circle, for, to sympathy with her misfortunes, did she attribute the alteration for the worse in Grace's health and spirits. She also felt impatient for their removal to Como, trusting that the genial air and magnificent scenery, surrounding that beautiful spot, and the tranquillity that she would at last enjoy, would again restore her.

Lucy, who observed the general sadness, laughed and chattered, in the hope of enlivening the little party; and Grace, at Mrs. Stanhope's request, had consented to accompany Lucy and Falkland, in order, before their departure, to see some of the lions of Milan.

"He will soon be here," said Lucy, "and I shall so enjoy having you with us, Grace."

Grace smiled her thanks, and was about to leave the room to prepare for their drive, when the door was burst open, and Jessy, pale as death, rushed into the room.

"Oh, Miss Grace, Miss Grace," shrieked the affrighted girl, "Lord de Courcy is killed—shot dead—and here's Larry—"

"Whisht woman, whisht," interposed Larry, who had followed close at her heels. "Don't agitate yourself, Miss Grace dear; I didn't say he was kilt intirely out an' out, only shot into smithereens an' nearly murthered, by that hathen Judas, Talbot—the Lord lay the claw of his vingince upon him! an' I'm takin' him home,

[illegible] I'm hard to work [illegible] till I get [illegible] so I thought, [illegible] God bless ye, an' [illegible] grace in ye—"

Grace, who had started to her feet, and with [illegible] hands and gasping breath was listening to the harried harangue of Larry, now interrupted him:—

"Why do you lose time in words? Hasten to bring him in; send for a surgeon; waste not a single moment!"

"Long life to you, Miss Grace," and Larry sprang down the stairs to execute her commands.

Mrs. Stanhope, recovering from her horror and astonishment, flew in haste and anxiety to give orders for the safety and comfort of de Courcy. Teresa and Lucy hastened to support Grace, who, the moment she had given the necessary orders, sank back in a state of utter insensibility.

In the mean time de Courcy was brought in, and a servant dispatched for the most skilful surgeon. There was, fortunately, one, of great

reputation, near at hand, and he was soon in attendance.

When de Courcy opened his eyes, he looked around to ascertain where he was. Mrs. Stanhope, who was watching over him, seeing that he was sensible, said—

"My dear de Courcy, you are with anxious friends, and you can allay their anxiety only by keeping yourself quiet and composed!"

Il dottore Filiberto now entered the room, and Mrs. Stanhope retired that he might give his immediate assistance.

When Mrs. Stanhope returned to the sala, she found Grace slowly recovering from her swoon. Lucy, who was anxiously watching over her, had, on observing symptoms of returning animation, sent Teresa upon a pretended errand for some restorative; for she had, long since, penetrated Grace's secret, and, with true delicacy, desired to be the only witness, should she, on recovering, betray her feelings.

"Do, dear Madam," she said to Mrs. Stan-

hope, as the latter entered, "mix a little of that sal-volatile with water; it stands on yonder table." And, as the good lady was thus employed, she stooped over Grace, and whispered, "be composed, dearest, all will be well!"

Grace pressed her hand to her head, and sighed deeply.

Lucy saw that consciousness had returned, and making her swallow some of the restorative, signed to Mrs. Stanhope to remain quiet, and then sat down beside her.

"I am better," said Grace, after a few moments. "Tell me I pray you."

"There is, I trust, no danger; the doctor is now with him."

Grace shuddered as she thought of the pain he was suffering; she shut her eyes, and there was a long silence.

After what appeared to them an interminable period of suspense, the doctor entered the room.

"Well," exclaimed Mrs. Stanhope, starting up and advancing to meet him, "how is it with him, is the wound mortal?"

"*Non c' è paura!*" he replied, fixing his eyes upon Grace, who had raised herself from her reclining position. Struck by the intense anxiety depicted in her countenance, he advanced towards her.

"*Non si tima bella Signora ; non c' è pericolo.* (Do not fear, my sweet young lady, there is no danger)," and, without further preface, he took her hand, felt her pulse, and shaking his head, declared that she wanted as much care as his patient above. Then, with an expressive glance to Mrs. Stanhope, indicative of his desire to speak with her, he bowed, and left the room.

"There is in fact no danger to be apprehended," he said, as that lady had, with an alarmed expression of countenance, beckoned him into another apartment, "at least I hope not. I have succeeded in extracting the ball, which, although it has passed near the region of the heart, has not committed any very great damage ; and the loss of blood averts the danger of fever: but much care and quiet will

be necessary. I will return in a few hours, for at present, nothing more can be done, and, with your permission, will send something to compose the nerves of that *bella donnina*, for, unless they be quieted, she stands a greater chance of fever than my lord."

Mrs. Stanhope thanked the doctor, who then took his leave. He did not fail to send the medicine for Grace, which Mrs. Stanhope did not fail to see administered to her, insisting that, according to the doctor's advice, she should lie down in her own room and remain perfectly quiet.

The house was soon hushed into silence, unbroken, save by the stealing steps, or whispered enquiries, of the domestics.

Nothing could surpass the zeal or exertions of poor Larry, who declared that he would willingly have been shot himself twice over, sooner than that an individual hair of his master's head should have been injured. He was like the air every where, and as light too; and, what

for him was more wonderful, as silent as mystery. He would not leave his master for a single moment, and seemed terribly jealous of any one's doing any thing for him. He knew the exact moment when the patient desired drink,—guessed it, he said, by christian instinct. He attended, with the utmost exactness, to the orders of the surgeon, and took good care that every one else should do so likewise.

When the doctor returned, he pronounced his patient even better than he could have expected.

Mrs. Stanhope and Mme. de Froulay sat alternately by his sick bed; bnt nothing could induce Larry to stir from the anti-chamber, whither, when either of the ladies were in attendance, he retired; thrusting in his head every five minutes, to see that all was right, and no rules infringed by talking.

Lucy watched by Grace, who, finding herself really unable to sit up, had consented to go to bed. The medicine had the desired effect of

sending her into a calm and refreshing slumber; and Lucy, allowing Jessy to take her place, descended to see Falkland, who was desirous of speaking to her for a few moments.

It was late in the day before he had heard of the distressing occurrence, for, on his way to them in the morning, he had encountered some newly arrived friends, and had been detained in their service.

On hearing of it, he instantly went to the prison to learn, if possible, the particulars of the event, and to see that Talbot was well secured. The governor, however, could tell him only, that the prisoner had attempted Lord de Courcy's life, and had, in turn, been almost destroyed by Larry. That he was now well ironed, and in the murderer's cell.

"But how did he procure the pistols?" asked Falkland, "surely there must have been some great neglect."

"I have already punished, by dismissal, the officer who was guilty of that neglect," replied

the governor. "The prisoner was allowed to have a friend to see him early this morning, and we suppose that the fellow bribed the jailor, whose duty it was to search him, to let him pass without inspection. This is the only way he could have procured the fire arms; for I myself scrutinised his cell last night, which, indeed, I am in the habit of doing, always before retiring, to all the prisoners."

As Falkland detailed this to Lucy, Mrs. Stanhope entered the room.

"Ah," she exclaimed, "here is Falkland! What an event this is, is it not? I begin to think that my poor Grace will never have any peace. We had better have remained in England. First, here is Mme. de Froulay and all her misfortunes, which Grace feels as if they were her own; then, just when I was hoping for tranquillity, comes this scene, and it has quite overcome her."

"But is she really so ill?" asked Falkland much alarmed.

"The shock was so great," answered Lucy, "we all felt it, but she is so very delicate, that it was too much for her: I trust, however, she will be better to-morrow."

"Had I not better," enquired Falkland, "write to the Duke di Rinucci. If the account reach him, without warning, he may be imprudent enough to communicate it to the Duchess."

"You have forestalled de Courcy's wishes; but I think he would be glad if you saw the Duke yourself. He has, you know, but a lumbering wit, and may make some mistake."

"I will certainly do so; and will start to-morrow at day break—it will ease de Courcy's mind."

Nearly a week passed. Grace had, to all appearance, recovered her usual serenity; and de Courcy was doing extremely well.

"Larry," said he, one morning to his faithful attendant, "who was it that sat up with me last night?"

"Last night, my lord; sure, an' it was myself your honour."

"Yes, I know that, my good fellow, you have never quitted me; but there was some one besides."

"Sure it isn't for talkin' your honour is, whin Doctor Feelabird'stoe says that it'll do you such a power o' harm?"

"It does me much more harm, Larry, not to have my questions answered. Who was it, I repeat, that sat by me last night?"

"It's unpossible to say, my lord, seeing that myself was the only mortial man prisint. The Lord save us from the bad people! What was it like, my lord, this phanatomy that diluded you?"

"Leave this nonsense, Larry, it only irritates me, and tell me instantly who was the female that sat in that chair last night?"

"Well, my lord, if you'll forgive me, I'll tell you."

"Say on."

"Why then, your honor, it was the crathur Jessy, just come to watch your lord-hip a bit; while I courted a little 'sulphuric repose' as Dr. Feelabird'stoe says."

De Courcy looked disappointed, and turned his face towards the wall.

"Think o' that now!" muttered Larry.

"You have never told me, Larry, how I came to be brought here."

"For the love o' the blessed vargin," exclaimed Larry, in a voice of consternation, "don't ask any questions your honor, an' I'll tell you all about it."

"Well."

"Why thin, my lord, seein' you were so desperate bad intirely, an' thinkin' to myself o' the length o' the distance we had to go, I made bowld to run in here, an' minshin the fact o' the murther to the ladies. An', says I, Mrs. Standup, says I, my masther, Lord de Coorcy, was waylaid an' set upon, by a cilebrated cut-throat cuckaldy vagabon', called Talbot—(I

gave him that same title, my lord, bekase I wished the ladies to enthertain a proper an' becomin' horror o' the villain—divil burn him, Allilooliaw!) Well, your honor, I went right a-head forward for to say, that you were laying in the coach a swelthering' in your blood; an' sure enough, my lord, at this, up jumps Miss Grace, with her hands clasped, so, an' her face pale as a dhrisheen,* an' her eyes flashin' like two sky-rockets. An' she says, says she—'What's the use o' standin' there a-discoorsin' of? Go down, young man, an' bear your masther—manin you, my lord—up stairs, and lose not a moment; hashte—hashte!' An' down I was in a minit, my lord, an' thin Mrs. Stand-up herself—God be her bussum friend for it!—bushtled about, and got things in order for your honor. An' sure, my lord, while I was bringin' your lordship up the stairs, as tinderly as a cat carries a kitten, I heerd a shrill scrame, an' a sudden racin' and tearin' a people hither an'

* A celebrated Irish delicacy of the meat pudding genus.

thither; an' Jessy flyin' with salts, an' Miss Lucy with some other soort o' mid'cine, an' the docther with the curos name, rowlin' up stairs to tindher his attinshins. Then my lord, havin' got you on the bed, Dr. Feelabird'stoe came a saliwatin' an' varigatin' an' a fumigatin' of your lordship; an' timptin' the flickerin' bames of life back to their ould sockets. An', afther this, comes Jessy, an' says she, 'oh! Larry,' says she, 'Miss Grace is mighty afflicted intirely, an' the docther is as unasy about her as he is about his lordship, an' more, may be; an' it's feared I am that if one coffin is wanted, it'll save callin' agin to ordher another—manin, my lord, that if your lordship was to die, (which one may minshin now, seein' as how you scorns sich a transaction,) you'd be implicated in another world, an' have to stand thrial for it; 'kase, of course—but what is the matther, your honor, startin' up in this way?"

"How is Miss Shafton now? is she still ill?" demanded de Courcy much agitated.

"Asy, my lord, asy; sure I tould your lordship that if you asked me no questions, I would tell you all about it."

"Well, well!"

"Well, my lord, lie down thin! an' so, as I was sayin', as fast as you comed to the right abouts, so did Miss Grace, as if r'ally you were a pair o' siamy tuns,* an' went ill an' got well togither multifariously. But see to your honour, now a-tossin' an' a-turnin' in that fashion! Do, thry, an' lie asy my lord."

It happened in this, as in many other cases, that it is easier to advise and dictate than to practise. De Courcy turned from side to side, asked continual questions, seemed particularly interested in enquiring into the employments of all the ladies, and, at last, Larry was in despair, declaring that he was "beyant keeping convalisint or composed."

Mrs. Stanhope paid the Earl a visit. She was able to calm his uneasiness with respect to

* Siamese twins.

the Duchess, who remained in much the same state of health; and also that they had contrived to keep the fact of de Courcy's illness from her, merely informing her that he would be detained for a short period.

De Courcy endeavoured to express his thanks to Mrs. Stanhope, and his regret that Larry's impudence, in bringing him to her residence, should have occasioned her so much trouble.

"I will not hear a word against my friend Larry," replied Mrs. Stanhope, "I shall ever give him credit for his excellent sense, in having stopped here; but I must not have you talk or think of these things, for we are anxious to get you out of this sick room; and, by your flushed cheek, I fear you have been over exerting yourself already."

Doctor Filiberto, who arrived soon after, confirmed Mrs. Stanhope's conjecture. He gave her an expressive look, begged that all agitation might be avoided, and said he should attend in the evening. He had not, for the last two days,

repeated his visit, and Mrs. Stanhope did not augur well from his proposal.

Larry, to do him justice, tried to enforce the doctor's rules with as much strictness as the most tyrannical of nurses; "but," said he, "'tis of no use talking, for ould Nick himself has got howld of him, and an angel out of heaven—not to spake of a poor sinner like me—would not be able to keep him quiet."

Mme. de Froulay sat by de Courcy for a short period; and, when she retired, Larry sent to request that one of the other ladies would take her place; "for," said he, "to be sure he attinds more to the ladies than he does to the like o' me."

The doctor soon after paid his visit.

"Well?" asked Teresa, as he entered the room, after having remained some time with his patient.

"No, it is not well!" replied the man of healing. "Something has agitated him, and there is a great deal of fever; I expect he may be slightly delirious to-night, but have given

my directions, which, if attended to, will, I trust, soon set all to right again. "So," taking a seat by Grace, "do not look alarmed *bella Signorina.*" And *il dottore Filiberto* remained and chatted away part of the evening. He appeared to have taken a great fancy to Grace, and had always some pretty compliment for her.

At an early hour, the house was hushed, every one had retired to rest, and Larry sat watching anxiously the disturbed sleep of his master. Presently, he heard the door of the anti-chamber slowly and gently opened, he crept softly to caution the intruder.

"Yerra, then, Miss Grace, I jist thought as much: but don't ye be spilin' your beautiful eyes with sittin' up again to-night, more especially as I'm thinkin' the masther suspected it was not jist myself a sittin' by him last night."

Grace half smiled as she answered, in a whisper even lower than Larry's.

"Perhaps so, Larry, but he will fancy it is

Jessy; so lie down while I take your place, for, I am not inclined to sleep: when I am weary I will call you."

Something told Larry that however convincing his arguments might be, they would, in this case, be thrown entirely away. He believed in his heart that Grace spoke truth, when she said she was not inclined to sleep. "And to be sure," he muttered, as he laid himself upon the couch, and prepared to take some repose, "who has so much right to watch over him as herself, that gave him her first excessive love—a love she'll carry to the grave with her,—God bless her, an' sind her joy an' happiness at last."

Grace took her seat; and for some time, nothing was heard but the irregular breathing of the invalid; his sleep was disturbed, and every moment he became more restless. She turned to prepare the medicine, which was to be taken on awaking. As she did so, de Courcy pronounced her name; she started,—it was impossible he could see her, for she had placed

the lamp so as to remain in shadow; besides that, she was screened by the bed curtains. Gently drawing them aside, she endeavoured to ascertain if he were awake—but no, he still slept. As she gazed, with inexpressible anxiety, on his flushed cheek, he again pronounced her name, and, with a sudden start, awoke. Half arising, and holding forth his hand with a menacing gesture.

"She is mine!" he exclaimed, "she *cannot* wed another; she shall not! I will appeal to her father! he gave her to me."

He was evidently in a state of delirium. His eye wandered; his cheek was flushed.

Grace, imagining he would not recognise her, softly undrew the curtain; and, in a soothing tone, endeavoured to calm him, and make him swallow the medicine.

He turned, tried to distinguish her features; this he was unable to do, but the voice had struck upon his ear. He caught her hand, and, in a low voice, said—

"Grace, is it you, dear, dear Grace, my own

Grace!" then flinging it from him with violence, he continued, "But no, you are not my Grace! you are another's—you are married, married to—"

"No, no," exclaimed Grace painfully agitated, "I am not married, I never will be!"

"Swear it!"

"I do promise!—Now," and she offered the cup.

"Did I not say," he went on, pushing aside the hand, "that it must not be? Yes, when they told me you were a bride, I denied it; for, are you not mine? You *were* mine—yes, you were all mine—" and he put his hand to his forehead, as though he were endeavouring to collect his thoughts.

Grace took the opportunity of again pressing the medicine upon him; and, in a soothing voice, entreated him, for her sake, to take it. He took it from her hand and swallowed it, without a word. She then smoothed his pillow, and intimated that he must lie down and sleep.

"Yes, and when I am sleeping—even if I turn my eyes—you will be gone. Have you not thus mocked my sight continually?"

"I will not go, indeed I will not—believe me!" and she sat down, as if to assure him that she intended to remain.

"Give me your hand then!"

Afraid of irritating him, she laid her hand gently upon his; he seized it eagerly, and held it firmly in his own, as if to prevent the possibility of escape.

Apparently calmed by this concession, he laid down, and soon sank into a restless and uneasy slumber. By degrees, however, it became more quiet, and Grace, when she thought all danger of awaking him over, tried to disengage her hand: but the grasp was still firm, and she was obliged to desist. He slept on, his breathing became more regular, and his features more composed. The grasp had somewhat relaxed, and again Grace attempted to free herself; but the effort startled him, and

the hand was more firmly imprisoned than before.

Much embarrassed, and painfully agitated, she again resigned herself to patience. The day was begining to dawn, and the only sounds that disturbed the silence were the beatings of her own heart and the respiration of the invalid.

By degrees his breathing became gentle as an infant's, and, to Grace's inexpressible relief, she felt the fingers relax their hold. This time she was more prudent, and allowed some minutes to elapse ere she again attempted to release herself. At last, she did venture, and succeeded.

For a moment, she stood looking upon him. He appeared to be in a calm, refreshing sleep. Stealing gently from the room, she approached Larry. A touch was sufficient to arouse him: she placed her finger on her lip, pointed to de Courcy's room, and, without uttering a word, departed.

De Courcy's sleep continued, " all's one like

that of a new-born baby;" according to Larry, and he awoke refreshed, and apparently free from fever.

Larry, who had been watching him, the moment he saw he was awake, presented himself, and asked if his honour would take "a nice cup of tay," but de Courcy motioned him to wait. He pressed his hand to his forehead, as though he were trying to recollect something. At last, he asked—

"Was I not delirious last night, Larry?"

"Delirious, your honour? why thin you never were further from that same; for you've slept like a top all night, God be praised for it."

"You are deceiving me, Larry!"

"Decavin' of you, is it me that's decavin' of your honour? why thin, what for should I my lord?"

De Courcy made no further remark. Bidding Larry prepare the tea, he was again reclining on his pillow, when in moving round,

his hand came in contact with something on the quilt, and looking to see what it was, he beheld a ring. That ring was well known to de Courcy; oft had he pressed the hand that wore it. Yes, it was Grace's ring. He gazed upon it long, and, as he did so, the certainty that it was no dream, that had made so deep an impression upon him, during the past and previous nights, brought a rush of joy to his heart. Incapable of reflecting upon the circumstances in which he stood towards her, he felt only that she still loved him. The feeling brought healing with it; he pressed the ring to his lips; and hiding it carefully from sight, lay down to indulge the novel and delicious feeling of happiness.

"Won't your lordship take the tay thin, afther all?" exclaimed Larry, who, unconscious of the discovery, had been standing cup in hand for some time, whilst his master was indulging in a delicious reverie," an' jist when it's nice an' hot?"

"Ah, yes, Larry, my good fellow!" answered his master, with a cheerfulness of tone and manner that electrified Larry with delight.

"Why thin," exclaimed the latter "it's charmed I am to find that your lordship's vice is become so musical and sprightly agin!—'it's rin to all, an' a sunytone above pitch,' as the music mother says; an' it goes through one like a robin red-breast's how d'ye do of a frosty mornin'! An' throth, clare an' bright, like a pair of rifleting stars contagious to the moon, your honour's two eyes is a sparklin' upon me; more power to 'em! An' there's the tay, my lord, sthrong as gunpowder, an' gentle an' efficacious as a noggin o' mountain jew. An' here's the laste deeny, doony, dawny, 'ittle bit o' tousht, crisp as a clane shirt, an' thin as a fairy's finger. Come, your honour, ate a morshel of the tousht, its a sovrin rimidy 'ginst an impty stomach; an' sip a dhrop o' tay if you plase."

"Thank you, Larry; you are an excellent nurse."

A low knock at the door, and some one

entering the ante-chamber, caused Larry to turn his head.

"It's jist Jessy, my lord, come, I dare for to say, from Miss Grace, to know how your honour is this mornin'."

"Bid her enter."

Jessy approached the bed, with many enquiries concerning his lordship's health.

"Why, Jessy," replied the Earl, "many thanks to your excellent nursing, I am much better; but, I have not yet had an opportunity of thanking you for your kind attention in sitting up with me."

Jessy coloured, and looked at Larry, who gave her a significant wink that was not lost on de Courcy.

"No thanks needed, my lord, answered Jessy taking the hint, "I am sure I'd wish to be useful if I could."

All this time Jessy's eyes were very busy in examining the bed clothes, which examination proving fruitless, she began to busy herself in

smoothing them, declaring that "men nurses, at any rate, never knew how to keep things tidy."

Larry replied, by a very mischievous look; and de Courcy could not help enjoying her disappointment.

Having done all in her power to search the bed clothes, she next let her brooch fall, and was for some time employed in seeking for it on the floor.

"You seem very uneasy this morning, Jessy," remarked the Earl.

"Not at all, my lord; I was only looking for my brooch. I'm happy to see your lordship so much better," and, giving Larry a nudge and a glance, Jessy stepped into the ante-chamber.

A hint was never lost upon Larry, who soon found occasion to follow. When he returned, his eyes, also, seemed busy. In shaking up the pillows for his master, his hand, not unobserved by de Courcy, was passed over and under them.

"What is the matter, Larry? First Jessy

comes tumbling the pillows about, and now she seems to have infected you by her example."

"Well!" exclaimed Larry soliloquizing, and avoiding the question, "this bates *bannaher* an' *bannanslagh!* The am'let, the blessed am'let, that I took off the mother whin the coffin was screwed down—or, rayther, when the berrin-boys was a screwin' iv it—gone, gone for iver! Oh, wisha, why did I go for to lind it to that reformed Protishtant waitin' woman, to whom it was of as much use as a carving fork to a young heifer; or a pair of spectacles to a blind piper. Williloo! what 'll come to me, now it's distantly located from me? A rale morshel o' the paint o' the thrue cross, sowed up in holy saw-dust—gone! Larry Monaghan, Larry Monaghan, what'll you say to the infallible top o' the thrue church, whin he botherates you with a requist about it? Yerra, of coorse, I can answer for you:—you'll howld down your sconce an' blish blue blishes, you will. An' I can answer for *him* too, an' what he'll do. He'll up with the kays an' the croshier, an', in a sthate

of effervesin' fomentation, he'll bate you into a rainbow prisintly. I'd like to know, my lord, if you see a little bag, like a pincushion, about the quilt?"

"No, indeed, Larry, but you can search."

Larry proceeded to search, not only the bed, but groped under and over, and all about the room, during which occupation, he muttered.

"Sarch! aye, sarch for the drop o' whiskey that tumbled into the wather-butt, or the word o' grace in the pages of a swaddlin' missil! It's baulked I'm to be! an' so, it's o' no use addlin' your lordship any more about it. May be I'll find it, yet tho'—sure 'twould be something all as one similar to 'tarnal ruin to lose it complately!"

De Courcy had been much amused with Larry's little artifice, which, however, he had taken good care should not succeed. Larry, on his part, resigned the search until a more fitting opportunity, never doubting that it would be forthcoming: "For," he argued, "it's sartain sure that he has not found it, or he'd a been

ankshis to know how it came there, and would ha' bothered me with no end o' questions, afore this. Well, he's wondherfully better this morning, any how; an', I'm thinkin', it was the unknown varty of Miss Grace's prisince. What a mysthry rale love is, to be sure!—jist like the holy well, beyant Maraborough, which hales the limbs an' the conscience idintically at once. The power o' the pure passion, in the bussum o' that pure angel, has dispilled the masther's danger and mintal unasiness, surreptitiously. An' now, he's as curos about livin' things as a new-born babby; an' keeps his fine filbert-coloured eyes ajar, to see what's goin' on around him. An' its lapin out o' the bed, God forgive me, he'll be prisintly, to the discomfiture and sudden rethrate of the attintive famales."

Grace, on retiring to her own room, had hastened to bed. She was wearied from watching, and exhausted by emotion, and, consequently, soon sank into a sound sleep.

It was not until she arose, that she perceived the loss of her ring, and, then it was with no slight tribulation that she did so. She searched her toilet table, although she felt sure that she had not taken it off. She seldom did, for it was an early gift from her dear father, and she wore it constantly. Upon reflection, it struck her that it must have slipped from her finger whilst de Courcy held her hand. What rendered this more probable, was that, of late, from her having become much thinner, the ring was too large, and she had often felt afraid of losing it. Jessy was instantly dispatched in search of it, but, as we have seen, without success. The latter, however, assured her mistress that she need be under no apprehension, for that Larry was positively certain that his lordship had not seen it; and that Larry would seek for it the first opportunity. It would, no doubt, fall out of the bed clothes, and then all would be right.

It was some relief to Grace to feel assured

that de Courcy had not found it; though she still felt deeply grieved for the loss of her father's gift.

"It's not lost, dear Miss Grace; I am sure Larry will take care and find it. You know he would do anything in the world to oblige you."

Grace was obliged to be satisfied. But, day after day passed, and still the ring was not to be found. She began to hope that she had lost it elsewhere. Jessy had, as she said, searched high and low for it; and Grace, with infinite regret, gave it up as lost.

From the loss of the ring, however, might be dated de Courcy's recovery. He got better so rapidly, that, in the course of another week, doctor Filiberto consented to his descending to the drawing-room; saying that the change of atmosphere, together with the company of so many *belle donne*, would, no doubt, complete the cure; but he begged that the ladies would engross all the talking, and, also, insist, on the invalid's remaining in a reclining position.

It happened that Falkland was seldom visible; for, not only was he obliged to attend, for de Courcy, in the prosecution of Talbot, but he had to to give up some portion of his time to the friends whom he had encountered. Talbot's case was drawing to a close; the witnesses from Paris had arrived, with sufficient testimony to convict him, had he not already convicted himself by his base attempt upon the life of de Courcy. The Earl, however, insisted that he should not be tried for that attempt, but solely for his robbery of the Marquis de Froulay.

Seeing, then, so little of his supposed rival, de Courcy did not awake from the delirium of happiness, into which he had been thrown by discovering Grace's anxiety and care for his recovery.

"Really, Lord de Courcy," exclaimed Lucy one morning to him, upon observing the listless manner in which he turned over the leaves of a book, that he held in his hand, "you do not seem to appreciate the happiness you enjoy,

surrounded, as *il dottore* would say, by *quattro bellissime donzelle.* No, you certainly are not sufficiently aware of your blessed state!"

"What can make you imagine, Miss Maitland, that I am so ungrateful, as well as insensible?"

"Why, in the first place, you do not look as if you felt the full charms of our society; and in the next, you have never said one pretty thing to either Miss Shafton or myself, notwithstanding that we sent fifty times a day to your door to enquire the state of progress; for you know, we, not being privileged *matrons,* (glancing archly at Teresa,) were not allowed to come and relieve guard, and had no other way of testifying our anxiety."

De Courcy's eye stole towards Grace. She did not look up, but he saw that the colour had deepened on her cheek. "I fear," he replied, "Miss Shafton will not assent to the truth of your assertion."

"What an ungracious animal! Now, I will

not call upon Miss Shafton to confirm the truth of my assertion, for you do not deserve to have it confirmed. Fye upon you, to doubt a lady's word!"

"We are apt, Miss Maitland, to doubt that which would make us too happy to believe."

Well, that makes some amends. I suppose I must forgive you for that *joli compliment;* not that I appropriate it all to myself," she added archly, "but, (observing she had succeeded in embarrassing the Earl,) you have never related to us the particulars of your scene with that horrid wretch."

"Dear, thoughtless Lucy," exclaimed Grace, "you forget that Lord de Courcy is not yet sufficiently strong to enter into such agitating details."

The Earl thanked Grace by a look, as he answered—"There is little to be told. When I entered the prison, the villain immediately touched upon a subject, which he knew would make me almost desperate. I endeavoured to command

my temper, for some time, and required him to enter upon the business which had occasioned my visit; but he continued to insult me; so losing all patience, I believe I was about to fly upon him, when he discharged the pistol. Had I not been accompanied by the faithful Larry, who incurred my displeasure for his obstinate determination not to leave me, Talbot would have made more sure of his work."

There was a general exclamation of horror.

"What an invaluable creature that servant of yours is," observed Lucy; "not only for his attachment and fidelity, but that he must be a continual source of amusement!"

"He is, indeed, invaluable!" replied de Courcy. "Twice he has been the means of saving my life, besides rendering almost numberless other important services."

"Well," remarked Lucy, "you will not, I think, despise Miss Shafton's predictions another time. Do not you remember she warned you of danger, which I, to say the truth, thought

excessively absurd. Pray, Grace, have you the gift of second sight—for, in this instance, you might have pretended to it?"

"My anticipation of danger," replied Grace, "arose, I imagine, from my knowledge of the turpitude of the man's general actions. I concluded that such a hardened and vicious mind would stop at nothing."

Lucy had playfully patted Grace's hand, as she spoke. Suddenly she observed that her ring was missing.

"Dear me, Grace, why you have not your ring on! I never saw you without it before; did you know it was not on your finger?"

Almost unconsciously Grace looked at de Courcy. The lost ring was a perpetual source of uneasiness to her; but he, who felt how embarrassed she would be, appeared not to heed the question. Reassured by his indifference, she replied, though in a faint voice:—

"I am grieved to say that I have lost it!"

"Lost it, my dear Grace!" cried Mrs. Stan-

hope, in surprise, who knew how Grace prized the ring, "how could you have lost it?"

"I fancy it must have slipped off my finger, it had become so much too large for me."

"Yes, poor child, you have grown so thin; but we must have it looked for."

"Jessy has already looked everywhere, so I fear it would be unavailing."

The doctor now entered, and, as Lucy had predicted, was loud in his exclamations upon de Courcy's happiness.

"Ah! my friend," he cried, with mock solemnity, "you are, indeed, quite safe from the effect of your late wound; but who can guarantee you from the effects of those that you are now in danger of receiving? There, the skill of poor Filiberto will be of no avail!"

"Right, doctor, very right!" exclaimed Lucy laughing, "and, I assure you, we have all prepared our weapons, and mean to lay regular siege."

"The weapons are already too deadly, mia

Signora. But, be merciful, (and with a soft glance) be content with one heart at a time!"

"Nay, Signor dottore, when I gained yours, it was quite involuntary; so you must not reproach me with that."

The Doctor smiled at the artful turn Lucy had given to his remark, and declaring that in another week de Courcy might return to Como, he took his leave.

Ardently did the Earl desire an opportunity of speaking to Grace alone; but the week had nearly elapsed, and none occurred. He fancied that she avoided all chance of being left alone with him; by withdrawing on the slightest probability of such an occurrence. Still he felt the charm of being near her, of knowing every day that he was sure of beholding her, of pressing the ring to his heart, and believing that she loved him.

He was one morning alone, indulging his usual reflections, when Falkland entered. He started, he tried to be cordial, and thanked him

with more energy than real warmth, for his exertions.

"Oh, do not mention it," replied Falkland carelessly, "I have done only what one friend should always be ready to do for another. However, it is all right—Mme. de Froulay's estates are restored to her!"

"Did Talbot confess?"

"No, but the evidence was as strong as it could be against him. He is completely disgraced; but, I think you are wrong in allowing the rascal to be set at liberty—it is an injustice to society!"

"He is, you say, exposed and disgraced; what further injury can such a miserable wretch accomplish?"

"God knows, a rascal like that always finds mischief enough come in his way! However, he is ordered to quit Lombardy within twenty-four hours, so you will have nothing to fear from his malice, whilst you remain in this part of the country."

"Did Tebaldi give you any assistance?"

"Scarcely any. He has retired to his 'castello'—but I did not need his help."

"Well, I am infinitely obliged to you, and the more so, that I know how much more agreeably your time might have been spent."

"What, you have heard, that I am about to become a Benedict? Well, we must all come to it, and I think I stand a tolerable chance of happiness; for—"

The entrance of Grace and Teresa prevented the conclusion of the speech; which conclusion would have left de Courcy in a very different state of mind, but, it was his fate to be tormented, and tormented needlessly. He grew deadly pale: his hopes (he scarcely knew how sanguine they had been) were suddenly and rudely cast down. "A *tolerable* chance of happiness," he mentally repeated. "A *tolerable* chance, and this from the man who weds Grace Shafton, and who seals my misery! Grace, too, how can she, how dare she give her hand away

when her heart is another's? Or, have I deceived myself, and was it mere compassion that dictated her anxiety and care for me during my illness? But no, had it been mere compassion. it would have shown itself openly! Love, love alone, caused her to creep to the sick couch, to watch by the pillow, and to soothe the fevered brain."

During this mental soliloquy, Falkland was congratulating Teresa on the recovery of her fortune. Grace had been observing de Courcy's pale and agitated countenance. Of late there had been between them, a communing, not of the lips, but of the heart. There had been in each a renewing of old feelings, old hopes. Grace was convinced that de Courcy still cherished her image—' had it not been present with him during his fever? Did not every look, every tone, tend to confirm the idea?'

Observing, then, de Courcy's altered appearance, Grace asked him, in an anxious and faltering voice, if he felt worse.

De Courcy started, fixed upon her an angry, and almost contemptuous, glance, as he replied, in a tone as cold as his look, "much better, thank you; so much so, that the doctor allows me to take my departure for Como to-day."

Gerard's cheek grew pale, but for an instant only. Wounded feeling, and mortified pride soon sent a brilliant glow to chase away the prevailing paleness. Forcing herself to reply, she observed, that she was happy to hear he was about to be released from his unpleasant confinement; then, turning to Falkland, she entered into conversation, with as much spirit and nonchalance as she could command. De Courcy's eye was fixed upon her. "Strange, incomprehensible girl!" he thought, as he beheld her flashing eye and glowing cheek. But the light of the one soon became subdued, and the colour of the other faded to a hue paler than usual, as the unnatural excitement subsided; and taking an early opportunity, she quitted the room.

Hastily shutting herself in her own chamber, she gave way to a gush of irresistible passion. Her outraged feelings sought relief in tears; in vain she tried to suppress them, they would have way! Bitterly did she reproach herself for her weakness, in having so long allowed the image of de Courcy to reign unrivalled in her heart; and her cheek burned with shame, when she thought that he had detected that weakness, and detected it only to insult her. She resolved that, neither by word nor look, would she ever give him reason to imagine she nourished for him the slightest affection. She would tear his image from her heart, and she almost desired that they might again be thrown together, to convince him how indifferent he was to her. Thus resolved she checked her tears, and tried to efface the traces they had left; but some time was necessary before her swollen and heavy eyelid could regain its wonted delicacy. Determined not to give de Courcy the triumph of imagining that she grieved at his departure, she sat down to write some letters to England.

A knock at the door soon interrupted her, and, in a vexed tone of voice, she desired the intruder to enter.

Jessy made her appearance.

"Well, Jessy, what do you want? I do not wish to be interrupted!" and Grace looked up at her, with an expression of countenance easily understood by every class of periodical perusers.

"I beg your pardon, Miss Grace; only Larry requested me to say that, if you would but be so kind as to see him before he went, and just allow him an audience, that he might take leave of you; he would be so very thankful. But, if it's a liberty, Miss Grace, I hope you'll excuse me for allowing myself to be persuaded by him, to come and ask you. But, poor fellow, he's been waiting about all the morning in the hope of seeing you."

"Oh, I will see him certainly! Is there any one in the small breakfast room?"

"Not any one, Miss."

"Then I will see him there in a moment or two."

"Thank you, Miss!" and away skipped Jessy, delighted at having succeeded in her mission.

"What did she say darlin', what did she say? did she pour out on you for my impertinence? Tell us alagh, do?"

"No indeed, Larry, for though she does not look quite like herself just now, and seems to me as if she had been crying. She told me to bid you go into the small sitting-room, and she would speak to you there."

"Heaven bless her, the jewel inistimable! Shall I go now, Jessy?"

"Yes, if you like."

"I'd betther give you somethin' to keep me in mim'ry till I come down I'm thinkin," and he impressed a rapid half dozen of kisses on her cheek.

"You're very inpertinent, Larry."

"Whisht, I'll be down agin immadiately, an' make up the dozen. You shall have fair baker's measure!" and up stairs he bounded like a cork out of a bottle of Guiness's stout.

Tapping softly at the door, the gentle voice o' Grace permitted his intrusion: and mild, modest, meek, and melancholy, he presented himself to her inspection.

"You wished to see me, Larry?"

"Thrue for you, Miss Grace, it's a fault I'm often a committin'."

"So you depart for Como to-day?"

"We do that same, Miss, an' bad 'cess to it—savin' your prisence! an' I believe, Miss Grace, it's doomed men my masther an' myself are, for we niver are to rest in any spot where our hearts are—but always rushin' and drivin', like mad novellists, from the objects of our attictions. Now here, now there, like a tantalizin' hos in a vardint meadow, playin' a soort o' bob cherry game with the sieve of oats. But the masther, God bless him, bates all the men in small-clothes I ever clapt my obsarvers on; an', sartainly, if it wasn't for some thrays in his character that appare rasonable, I should be half inclined to say he wasn't come to the years

o' futurity yet! God help us, he's niver been himself since the hidjus conspiracy that we diskivered and repudiated. Ah! Miss Grace darlint, you shouldn't go to believe that that noble and affictionate man would give lodgin's in his bussum to a thought, word, or deed that operates aginst your happiness. What's the use o' mincin', an' chokin the honist outcry o' truth? sure, he's dyin' every day, mollycule by mollycule, for you. God save him, and dispil the dilusions!"

"I really cannot understand you, Larry; I do not know what you mean."

"How should you, Miss? far be it from me to say that you did. It isn't asy to understand me, seein' as how the masther an' myself are livin' in a state borthering on a want o' consciousness—God mynd us! But *this* is asy to understand, without a pair of *octavo lins*—the masther an' myself are witherin' out o' the animal kingdom, like convolvilisses, in the midst o' the light that we can't pinithrate,—

Heaven sharpen our eye-sight! An' Miss Grace, it'll be a cruel thorn amidst the rose-buds of your mim'ry, to reflict that, when the wather-rats an' slidhery worms are dejestin' of us, you have put the first an' last tinpenny tack in our respictable coffins! One little word,—asy to say, 'kase o' the scarcity o' letthers in it; an' momenshus in manin', 'kase of savin' a pair of valible lives—one little word repated, an' repated in time, would kiver our contimporaries with confusion, sind our sowls frantic mad with joy, dispil darkness and dilusion, bring back the rale ould times, an' baulk the big wather-rats and slidhery worms. That's all, Miss Grace: I humbly crave pardon if I molisted your serinity; but, Miss Grace, the masther is dear to me, his life is valible to me as my own, for mine hangs a fluttherin' on it, like a dhrop o' jew on a cob-wig,—when the cobwig is rint, the dhrop o' jew is dispirsed for iver! Will you say you forgive the lassitude I've taken, Miss Grace? an' think, pray think

over the communication I've confided to you. Rimimber, rimimber for ever, an' niver forget it, it's all bother about his bein' exchanged, or deranged from his fust passhin,—that's flat folly and fib! an' any inhabitant of any o' the nath'ral kingdoms: any masklin' man, I mane, who says it, will find Larry Monaghan willin' to sarve his turn any day in the week, not barin' the Sunday, undher the prisint circumstances!"

"Really, Larry, I think you labour under some extraordinary mistake; or, I cannot draw from your discourse sufficient actual meaning, to enable me to say that I clearly understand what it is you wish me to remember."

"No, Miss Grace? God help us! See what a blinker passhin is! Thry as I will, choose an' select my exprissions ever so carefully, no christian sowl can look me in the face an' say, 'I see.' To think o' the vartue of that saint-like paragin of a man—he a lord too, an' so inimical to disperate coorses—shudderin' at the minshin of a second affiction; and 'voidin' the

society of the bigger half o' the creation, like a sciptin, all for the bein', the angel one, the spiritual saint of his secret soul; an' this—all this (where's the police report 'll match it?) all this for nothin'! "all to no purpose," as the say said to the odd woman an' her mop! Well, I'll bear that in mind as No. 1. of unmatched curiosities. Good bye, Miss Grace! I call the attention of heaven to you—excellent and beautiful bein,' an' may your riverintial mind be brought to a sinse of the distress an' the despair that's diggin' graves for Lord de Coorcy, an' the last o' the Monaghans! God be with you, Miss Grace, an' if iver we meet agin, in this intinsive sphere of action, I hope the scales will have fallen from all our eyes, an' the weights from all our hearts! Amin, farvintly, Amin!" and, powerfully affected, with his face buried in his hands, poor Larry retreated from the apartment.

Grace, although she affected not to understand Larry, had yet seen the drift of his

allusions. She was too well assured of the poor fellow's good intentions, to feel angry with him; but, she thought he also laboured under a delusion—the same delusion, from which she had just awoke. She rang for Jessy, who somewhat discomposed from the excess of her sympathy with Larry's grief, soon made her appearance.

"Is Larry gone?"

"No, Miss!"

"Well, take him this!" giving Jessy a purse, netted by her own hands, and containing about ten guineas. "Tell Larry, that I wish him to keep this purse for my sake; and that I send it to him as a token how I appreciate his fidelity and good feeling! and that I have put some few pieces in it, only, because it is not lucky to give an empty purse."

Jessy took the purse, and hastened to delight her lover with this mark of her mistress' regard.

Grace again sat down to her employment —again to be interrupted.

Another knock at her door, and Lucy's voice entreating to know if she might enter.

"Yes, pray come in, dear Lucy."

"What, writing letters? Come I'm sure there's no particular occasion for these letters to-day. Do you not know that Lord de Courcy is going? you surely mean to take leave of him?"

"I do not see any great necessity for that, Lucy! I suppose we shall see him at Como; and I have deferred writing to Mrs. Strickland so long, that I am determined not to let this day pass over."

"Be it so, but the day is long."

"But I have other things to do; I have to go to the bookseller's, whither Falkland promised to accompany me."

"I do not think I shall give him permission, if you make yourself so disagreeable."

"In that case, I must seek some other companion."

Lucy cast a penetrating glance upon her

friend, and although Grace was now firm and calm, she observed the traces of recent agitation. Changing her tone, she said:—

"I know, my dear Grace, that your taking leave of Lord de Courcy is a matter perfectly unimportant; but, after his illness, and the anxiety and solicitude that has been testified by all, I think it will look a *little particular*, if, after having sat in the drawing-room every day, and *all* day, you should absent yourself just at the very hour of his departure."

Grace felt that Lucy was right; he might attribute her absence to other cause than that of indifference. She cast a look in the glass—

"Come, love, leave this important letter for the present, and don your bonnet and walking attire; and, after his departure, which, I believe, takes place immediately, we will go the bookseller's."

Grace arose—"yes, the bonnet would be a convenient screen; it would hide the traces of her recent tears." She arranged her long and

glossy curls with unusual care; their dark colour formed a beautiful contrast with the white chip bonnet, which she had adopted for her half mourning. She was soon ready, and tapping at Lucy's door, who had left her to make similar preparation, they entered the sala together.

Larry had just informed his lordship that all was ready; and Mrs Stanhope was impressing upon him the necessity of being very careful of his health. "Remember," she observed, "you are not yet very strong, and I am half angry with the doctor for setting you free so soon."

De Courcy smiled. "I am sure, my dear kind friend," he said, "had it not been for your good nursing, I should have stood little chance of such a speedy convalescence."

"Well then, take care of yourself, and when we are settled at Como, let us see you often. Ah, Grace, I was just going to send for you and Lucy. I am really delighted to find you are going out. How much better you look!"

observing, with surprise, the heightened colour of Grace's cheek, "quite like herself, de Courcy, does she not? But, I forget, you did not know her before her illness!"

De Courcy, with a bitter smile, and a tone, which, to Grace's ear, savoured of contempt, replied that "Miss Shafton did indeed look radiant with happiness." Then, hastily taking leave, he left the room, and, in another moment, was on his road to Como.

"Very strange!" thought Lucy, who had observed the extraordinary change in the deportment of both de Courcy, and Grace. "There is something in all this, that I do not understand. I am positive they love each other and, of late, there has been a gradual thawing of the ice which appeared to have surrounded them; now, we are at freezing point again; more cold, more haughty, and more distant than ever!" She was about to say something on the subject to Grace; but, upon observing how completely the glow, that woun-

[illegible]

[illegible] had summoned to her [illegible], was [illegible], and how pale, and dejected she appeared, she checked her curiosity, and [illegible] herself with determining to take the earliest possible opportunity of fathoming the mystery. That Grace was unhappy, that she had been so, even before the death of her father, Lucy felt thoroughly convinced. This unhappiness she attributed to a disappointed attachment, and she felt certain that de Courcy was the object of that love, and that he responded to it. What, then, could be the reason of the strange coldness between them? what the obstacle that separated them? These were points that Lucy was unable to elucidate; she was, therefore, obliged to trust to time for their explanation.

CHAPTER V.

THE second day from the departure of de Courcy, was that fixed upon for the removal of our party, to the lake of Como. Every thing was ready, the carriages packed and waiting, and a few moments more would have seen them on the road, when an equipage, evidently belonging to a person of rank, dashed up to the door. The horses were covered with foam, and it was easy to perceive, that they had been put to their utmost speed.

The noise of its approach had attracted the ladies to the window; a moment's glance sufficed for Teresa. Wildly clasping her hands together, she shrieked, "My child, my child!" and sank, almost deprived of sense, upon a seat.

A note was immediately delivered to her, but she was incapable of taking it. Grace, seeing her agitation, asked permission to open it, and read the contents. It was from the mother of Teresa, and ran as follows:—

'Teresa, your dear boy is ill; but we trust that your presence may still restore him. Hasten to us, forget the past! your father entreats your presence; and the arms of your mother are open to receive you!"

"I am ready, let us go!" said Teresa, with a fearful composure, so soon as Grace had made her understand the contents of the note. "I am ready!" she repeated to the messenger, who stood awaiting her reply.

"I must change horses, illustrissima," replied the man, and vanished to see this necessary duty attended to.

Whilst this was doing, Teresa's things were removed from one carriage to the other; and in five minutes, all was ready. Throwing her arms round Grace, she sobbed an adieu.

"You will write to us, dear Teresa?" said Grace.

"Yes, yes, my dear, my best friend! Farewell!" And the anxious mother threw herself into the carriage, and was borne rapidly away.

This event had happened with such lightning speed, that when the remaining party looked upon each other, they could scarcely believe it had actually occurred; and were convinced that they had not been in a dream, only by the absence of Teresa.

"Well," said Mrs. Stanhope, "it is fortunate we were not gone; they were only just in time."

"I declare," cried Lucy, "if it were not for poor Teresa, and that I really love the little Ugo, I could have wished the child had actually died, to punish that old barbarian. I am glad, however, that he is obliged to give in; though I do not envy Teresa's life, if it must be passed in his company."

"You forget," observed Grace, "that she lives only in her boy; and that under any cir-

cumstances, however disagreeable, she will be happier with him."

The residence Falkland had selected did justice to his taste; it was situated on the eastern arm of the lake between Lecco and Bellagio. The house was not seen till on a near approach; so surrounded was it by the pine, the cyprus, the orange, the fig, and the laurel, interspersed with the vine and the olive. The whole banks of the lake were visible from this delightful retreat.

Mrs. Stanhope, Lucy, and Grace—who, perhaps, could better than either, appreciate the beauties of the surrounding scenery—were loud in their demonstrations of delight and satisfaction.

"And, now," asked Mrs. Stanhope, of Falkland, "that you have provided so exquisitely for us, what have you done for yourself? for, I fear, you are not yet privileged to share our abode, and, you know, we must positively see you every day; we can't do without you at all,—can we Lucy?"

"I have taken care of all that," replied Falkland, "and have provided myself with an apartment sufficiently close at hand. When Rinucci heard that you were about to reside so near, he, very politely, gave me a most pressing invitation to remain at his Villa; which would have been very convenient, for it is only a few miles farther up, and a boat would have brought me to you in ten minutes.

"And why did you not accept his invitation?"

"Why, in the first place, I feared it would be rather too much of a restraint. I must have given him some portion of my time; and, in the next, I do not quite understand de Courcy's manner to me. We were, once, almost intimate friends, but, of late, there has been a want of cordiality on his part, which rather increases than diminishes. As I am totally unconscious of having given him cause for such a change of conduct, I should not choose to remain under his sister's roof."

"Now that positively is fancy," replied Mrs.

Stanhope, "for, he speaks of you in the highest terms; and was most grateful to you for your exertions during his illness."

"So he told me. Oh, yes, if *words* could prove that we were as good friends as ever, I should have nothing to complain of; but when the whole manner—the very tone of the voice—contradicts them, words are idle."

"Indeed you are mistaken: he speaks of you as of one in every respect entitled to his esteem."

"At all events, I am not aware of having done any thing to forfeit it. But, it is of no consequence! He appears to be unhappy, and may perhaps have become irritable and full of whims, which is a pity; for I always thought him a noble fellow."

Grace truly enjoyed the beautiful calm of their new residence. The time was spent happily in wandering about under the shade of the trees, or gliding along the glassy bosom of the lake, which, like a mirror, reflected the picturesque and lovely scenery that encircled it.

Under the influence of this peaceful scene, her health began to improve; and, though her friends still saw that there was a melancholy which destroyed all hope of her being gay and happy, she was yet cheerful; and, as usual, took an apparent interest in everything.

A fortnight elapsed in this indolent and tranquil mode of life. Grace began to feel uneasy at the silence of Teresa; and Mrs. Stanhope, to think de Courcy rude and ungrateful.

As they sat one evening watching the progress of an elegant gondola pursuing its way on the smooth surface of the lake, it made for shore, so near their abode as to indicate the approach of visitors.

Three gentlemen disembarked, and advanced towards the house. One of them was immediately recognized by the observant party, as de Courcy; "and the other," said Falkland, "is the Duke; but who the third may be, I know not. He is a stranger to me!"

Grace had so schooled herself to command her feelings, that even Lucy could scarcely observe any change of colour or trace of emotion; the only difference visible, was a colder expression of countenance; a compression of the lip; and a slight contraction of the brow, such as when a person suffers from a bodily pain that they would fain conceal.

Mrs. Stanhope rose to welcome her guests, and, as she approached de Courcy, said:—

"You have almost lost your character, my lord! I will not tell you half the charges that have been brought against you."

"In which," replied de Courcy, "ingratitude took a prominent situation; but I hope to prove to you that I neither do, nor will, merit that epithet. Allow me, however, before I enter upon my exculpation, to introduce to you the principal cause of my apparent neglect. Count Rosano—the Duke is already known to you."

At the mention of Count Rosano's name, no slight interest was excited in the ladies. All

observed, with curiosity, the man who had exercised such a fatal influence over the destiny of Teresa.

He was tall and eminently handsome; his beauty of that character which distinguishes his countrymen. His large and piercing black eye, though full of sentiment, was devoid of the deep intellectual expression which bespeaks a highly cultivated mind united to real genius; it was the abode of deep and unchecked passion, tempered but little by misfortune. The nose was aquiline; the upper lip was concealed by a mustache of the same raven hue as his hair: the curve of the chin bespoke firm determination, if not obstinacy, of purpose.

Grace was pondering in her own mind the extraordinary conduct of de Courcy in having brought Rosano, where he must have expected to encounter Teresa, when the Earl arose, and, advancing towards her, presented a letter—it was from Teresa.

"I received it only yesterday," he said, "and

until then, fancied that Mme. de Froulay was with you."

Grace took the letter eagerly. "I am delighted to hear from her; my anxiety was becoming painful. Does she say Ugo is better?"

"His life has just been pronounced out of danger; but he is still very ill."

Rosano had heard from de Courcy the friendship that subsisted between Grace and Teresa; he watched the speaking countenance of the former, as she received the letter, and, taking a seat by her, without further ceremony, entered into conversation.

Grace found him extremely interesting. There was a candour, a naïveté of character that gave the idea of sincerity. He spoke to her of Teresa, and seemed delighted when she entered into any little detail concerning her.

The evening passed agreeably away, and, when they took leave, the Duke made a very pompous apology for being unable to show them that attention he desired.

Mrs. Stanhope replied with due gravity. "They all," she said, "deeply regretted the cause; but she trusted that she should see the duke and his friends, whenever he could spare time, or when his presence was not required by the invalid."

"My dear de Courcy," exclaimed Rosano to his friend, as they disembarked before the magnificent seat of the Duke di Rinucci, and, as the latter stalked gravely forward, "you did not tell me what a paragon of beauty this friend of Teresa's was. *Per Dio*, if my heart were not already occupied with the image of my poor Teresa, I should have become *innamorato pazzo* of this *bellissima Ingleze!*"

"You would then have been equally unfortunate, for her heart is already disposed of."

"Not to you certainly, for you seemed to prefer the old lady."

"No, I cannot lay claim to be distinguished by her. She is engaged to Mr. Falkland, the gentleman you saw there."

"I do not believe it! I am never deceived in these matters, and I am sure she does not care a straw for him."

"Nevertheless, she is engaged to him."

"Why he was paying his attentions to the other lady, the Alleyn."

"I really cannot account for these things, but it is as I tell you."

"What a dull fellow you must be then, to let him run off with such a prize. I have almost a mind to supplant him myself. You really have no taste de Courcy."

"Say rather the lady has none."

"Then you have tried?"

"I should never try to supplant any man."

"But suppose you did it *without trying*."

"I would never marry a woman that did not know her own mind."

"There I think you are right. But do you know my friend that you are strangely altered? You have grown abrupt in your manners; and have a continual gloom on your countenance.

I think it an ill compliment to me on my return to my country, after an absence of so many years."

"You forget my sister."

"No I do not, and make all natural allowance for your feelings on that subject; and were you the Duke, I should not be surprised at your extreme melancholy; but he bears his wife's illness with the philosophy of a brother, whilst you express all the tender solicitude of a husband."

"Even so," replied de Courcy. "But remember, nothing less than the probability of his own death, could affect the Duke."

"True; and then he would grieve for the loss the world was about to sustain."

CHAPTER VI.

After the departure of the guests, Grace hastened to open her letter, which, after a slight perusal, she read aloud:—

"My dearest Friend and Sister,

"I hasten to apprise you of the first gleam of hope that has shone upon my heart since I left you. To-day, and not until to-day, have the doctors given assurance of my Ugo's life. Had they delayed another day to send for me, my boy would have been sacrificed, and I could not have survived him! But I will endeavour to give you some connected account of events since we parted.

"On arriving at the Castello de' Tibaldi, I

with every demonstration of affection by my dear mother. I could scarcely return her caresses, so engrossed was I by my fears for my child. She divined my feelings, and, taking me by the hand, said 'I will lead you to him; he raves incessantly for you. God grant that your presence may calm him.'

"I entered the chamber, where, extended on a magnificent bed, and surrounded by luxuries, lay my beloved, my dying child.

"Poor Louise, the tears chasing each other down her cheeks, watched by him, and tried to soothe his impatient cries for his mama.

"On the opening of the door, he drew the bed-clothes over his face, and, exerting his little remaining strength, screamed out, 'I will not see him, take him away, I will not see him! I hate him!'

"Louise uttered a cry of delight as she saw me! 'Ugo,' she exclaimed, leaning over him, 'see, it is your mama, your own dear mama!'

"'No, no, *that* is not my mama; *she* is very kind, but I have but one mama, and I will never have another.

"I could no longer restrain my feelings; I threw myself upon the bed, and sobbed out—my Ugo, my child, it is I, look on me.

"In an instant he had thrown the clothes from him, and, after giving one glance at me, I felt his little arms twine round my neck with a convulsive grasp, which was only relinquished as he fell back exhausted on the pillow.

"With the calmness that despair engenders (for I had no hope,) I ministered to his restoration. The first object his dear eyes encountered, upon re-opening, was the face of his anxious mother. He smiled, laid his head upon my bosom, and appeared satisfied. He took the medicine from my hands, and complied with all my requests. He was quiet and docile as a lamb.

"I looked anxiously at the doctor, but there was nothing in his countenance that permitted

hope. 'Had the mother,' he observed, 'been sent for sooner, he might have been saved; but I fear he is too far gone—nature is exhausted! On no account,' I heard him say to my mother, 'permit the Count to approach, or even let his name be mentioned; he is at present calm—it is the only hope!'

"Louise has since given me the following account of what had happened since she left us.

"The moment Ugo found himself left with Tebaldi, his sullenness sank into dejection; he ate not, slept not, and became pale and thin.

"Tebaldi tried every means of restoring his spirits, but in vain. The child shuddered at his approach; shrank from his touch; and wept in silence.

"Alarmed at his altered appearance, my father became enraged with Louise, whom he accused of encouraging his obstinacy; and, for a short time, withdrew him from her care. He was soon, however, glad to restore her to

her post. Ugo was seized with a fever that soon reduced him to a skeleton. The alarmed Tebaldi lavished every care upon him; but, as the fever increased, Ugo became more intractable. He shrieked at the approach of Tebaldi, and the sight of him threw him into alarming convulsions. If he heard his footstep, he shook with terror; or clenched his tiny hand, and shrieked his hatred of him. At times, he would call in agonizing tones for his dear mama; and Louise could pacify him only by telling him that I should soon come to him.

"At last Tebaldi was obliged to abstain altogether from appearing, and the Doctor declared that the only hope of saving the child's life was by gratifying his desire, and sending for his mother.

"Tebaldi, who, it appears, had been deeply struck by the hatred expressed towards him by the child, and who, for some time, had confined himself to his own particular apartments, upon hearing this, sent for his wife; bade her in-

stantly write for her daughter. 'Tell her,' he said, 'that her child's life depends upon her celerity; let Matteo take the carriage, and, with all possible speed, hasten to Milano, there obtain fresh horses, and return without delay.'

"My mother instantly executed his commands, and such was the celerity used, that I arrived some hours before even the impatient Tebaldi expected me.

"I have not yet seen him, he still keeps his apartment; and my mother tells me that he looks wild and haggard. But she dare not hint to him a request either to have medical assistance, or to take repose. Ever since my arrival, he has, they tell me, walked to and fro in his room. The only question he asks is, 'How goes on the boy?'

"I will not describe to you, my dear friends, the anguish I have endured. I have never for a moment left his room; my only rest being when, occasionally to pacify Ugo, I have laid down beside him.

"But the prayer of the mother has ascended to the Almighty; his blessing rewards our care! A favourable change has taken place, and this day, the physicians pronounced my boy out of danger.

"Farewell, dear friends, I will write again."

"Well," cried Lucy, as Grace finished reading the letter, "now that the child is out of danger, I positively declare that I am glad it has happened; and I heartily hope it may be the death of that grim old monster."

"I should think that no one could regret it;" returned Mrs. Stanhope, "but such grim monsters, as you call them, Lucy, are sure to live long enough to plague all who surround them."

De Courcy, and Rosamo, frequently joined in the little excursions that were planned; and the Duke begged that the ladies, whenever they felt inclined, would send for his gondola, which was superbly fitted up, and well manned by six, and sometimes eight, stout oarsmen.

He, now and then, honored them with his own company, which, as Lucy observed, generally proved more ornamental than agreeable.

In all these little excursions, Grace studiously avoided de Courcy—so studiously that it was impossible for him not to observe it. His pique arose to the highest pitch, and the coldness between them was greater than ever, and only concealed under the veil of politeness. Rosano, having heard of Grace's engagement to Falkland, did not attempt always to monopolise her; he often offered his arm to Lucy, thereby obliging Falkland to escort Grace, and separating the lovers.

"My dear Mrs. Stanhope," said de Courcy one afternoon, as he and his friend made their appearance, "if I become too frequent a visitor, you must lay the blame on Rosano, who teases me to death when I am not always ready to accompany him; and, indeed, never appears satisfied except when here."

"I am sorry, my dear de Courcy," replied

Mrs. Stanhope "that we owe your company to compulsory measures; I had hoped we were indebted for it to your own inclination."

"And so you are, but—"

"Really, Lord de Courcy," interrupted Lucy, "we are all extremely grateful to you for the pains you have taken to inform us what excessive delight you feel in our society. Well, we must pay a vote of thanks to Count Rosano, for procuring us so great a pleasure."

"You are too severe, Miss Maitland; I meant to say only—"

"That, were you left to yourself, we should see as much of you as we did the first fortnight of our arrival."

"Nay, I have already explained that, and shown you that my absence was occasioned by Rosano himself. But I see you are determined that there shall be open war between us."

"Not I, on my honour! on the contrary, I will issue a proclamation of peace instantly—on condition."

"Oh, name any condition, penance, or whatever you choose to propose, and you shall see how anxious I am to propitiate you."

"Well, then, you must immediately, and in the most graceful manner, offer me your arm, and propose to have the pleasure of accompanying me to the summit of yonder hill, which my unsophisticated eyes have hitherto beheld as a mountain, but which, I am told, is unworthy of that sublime denomination. Be that as it may, I am desirous of attaining the eminence, for it strikes me I shall be amply rewarded for my pains. Say, then, is the penance beyond your resolution, or your desire of peace?"

"Penance call you that?" replied de Courcy, gaily, "I am afraid that, if you give me such penances, my offences will be terribly frequent."

"I'll run the risk," answered the laughing girl, and, taking his arm, she tripped off, calling out, "Now, let all the courageous follow."

Rosano, not perceiving Falkland to be so alert, as he thought he ought to be, offered his

ers to Grace, and Falkland, rather surprised at Lucy's strange freak of running off with de Courcy, remained with Mrs. Stanhope.

"I do not think," said the latter lady, "that I shall reach the summit; but we will make the attempt, and shall, at all events, meet them coming down. But I cannot imagine what that madcap has got into her head; some scheme I wager!"

"If it be so," replied Falkland, "I certainly am not privy to it."

Meantime, Lucy and de Courcy had made considerable way; she rallying him upon his penance, and laughing at his protestations to the contrary. When they had arrived at the desired spot, to attain which took considerably more time than Lucy had imagined, she sat herself down upon the slope, declaring herself perfectly tired and out of breath.

De Courcy took a seat beside her, and, for some time, they gazed on the magnificent scene beneath. Lucy, her elbow on her knee, and

her cheek resting upon her hand, seemed for some moments lost in thought; and, as de Courcy looked upon her, he could not help admiring the strange mixture of gaiety and romance which her character afforded.

"There is the beautiful villa of the Duke di Rinucci!" she exclaimed at last, "how well it looks from hence!"

De Courcy replied with a sigh, for he thought of its suffering inmate.

"Pardon me, I ought not to have reminded you of so sad a subject; but this life is a strange mixture of smiles and tears, rain and sunshine."

"I hardly expected to find Miss Maitland given to moralizing."

"I dare say yon did not; neither am I much given that way, only on particular occasions! For instance, when first we met—do you remember that, Lord de Courcy?"

"Yes, I do perfectly!"

"Ah, that was indeed a melancholy occasion!

It will be long ere my dear friend recover it. See, there she is in the distance with Count Rosmo. It is almost a pity that your friend is not heart-whole; they would have made a handsome couple."

The Earl looked at her in some surprise—"You should say rather that it is a pity that neither of them are heart-whole."

"Indeed, should I, really? and pray who holds possession of Miss Shafton's heart, for, I confess, it has passed my penetration?"

"You are inclined to joke I see, Miss Maitland."

"I'll never less so in my life: and I assure you, if I had not known that Count Rosmo's affections were already engaged, I should have advised Miss Shafton to fall in love with him immediately."

"Mr. Fulkland would have been much indebted to you, for such advice."

Lucy looked rather astonished. "And pray what has Mr. Fulkland to do with it?"

"Nay, Miss Maitland, now you carry the joke too far. Miss Shafton's engagement to Mr. Falkland is generally known."

It was now Lucy's turn to blush. "You really are a penetrating man, Lord de Courcy! whenever I wish to discover an *affaire d'amour*, I will apply to you."

"In this case, you scarcely needed any assistance to your own penetration."

"Nay, now you are quite mistaken; you have no idea how you have enlightened me. Pray who told your lordship this wonderful truth?"

"Really, Miss Maitland, I cannot exactly say; I believe it was very generally reported."

"Don't you think them wonderfully ardent lovers?" asked Lucy, with provoking archness.

De Courcy was puzzled by Lucy's manner. Was she in jest, or in earnest? and what did she mean?

"And," persisted Lucy, "Miss Shafton looks so gay and happy; just what one would expect from a bride elect!"

"On my word, Miss Maitland, I—"

"And then, Mr. Falkland submits, with such exemplary patience, to the deprivation of her society for whole days; whilst his lady love is fulfilling the duties of friendship."

"There is no accounting for any man's coldness, or, if you please, patience."

"No, nor any woman's either! Well, I *am* rather surprised."

"I confess, I am at a loss to understand you, Miss Maitland."

"What! with your wonderful penetration." And she burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter. When she had fully indulged her risibility, she continued. "And so, upon the report of *every body*, whom I always understood to mean *nobody*, you took it for granted that Miss Shafton was engaged to Mr. Falkland."

"Nay, not exactly, for Falkland himself did not deny the engagement, when I taxed him with it."

"What, to Miss Shafton?"

The Earl paused to remember.

"Did Mr. Falkland positively tell you that he was engaged to Miss Shafton?"

"Indeed I will not be positive that Miss Shafton's *name* was mentioned; but, what could I suppose, who else could it be?"

"Oh, no one else of course!"

"What do you mean? pray explain yourself, my dear Miss Maitland!"

Lucy looked at him, for some little time, enjoying his increasing agitation; then dropping him a low curtsey, she said, with mock gravity.—

"Your most humble servant, Lord de Courcy. I am not surprised at your mistake, for who could have thought of poor humble me? I could never have been suspected of making the conquest of Mr. Falkland; and I have not the slightest doubt that, rather than have attributed his attentions to me, you would have set him down for Mrs. Miles Stanhope herself."

"My dear Miss Maitland," said the astonished de Courcy, his whole countenance beaming with delight—

"No, it's of no use; I shall not be pacified!" continued the amused girl, whose eyes were now completely opened, "I really thought your extreme neglect of me arose from your knowledge of my engagement to Falkland; but I perceive that I am a complete nonentity in your eyes."

"You are, believe me, by far the most pleasing object my eyes have beheld for some time! How could I have been so blind?"

Lucy did not doubt the truth of the former assertion.

"My dear Miss Maitland, how incomprehensibly dull I have been! Now, a thousand circumstances rush upon me!"

"Indeed, my lord, you have been most incomprehensibly stupid; but I can make some excuse for you. How was it possible for Lucy Maitland to win a heart when Grace Shafton was near? But, remember, when people cannot aim at the sun, they will sometimes be content with a lesser luminary."

"Indeed, observed de Courcy playfully, I

never for a moment doubted the power of your attractions; but my mind was so prepossessed with the idea, that I saw everything through a false medium."

"By the bye, I remember, when I met you first at Lady Stuart's, you asked me as a matter of course, if Falkland were expected; and, upon reflection, I thought how strange was the question."

De Courcy looked rather conscious; he wished Lucy's memory had not been quite so good.

"Well, I suppose you will now agree with me that it is a pity that Count Rosano is not heart-whole?"

"In anything else I will endeavour to agree with you."

"What, you don't think they would make a handsome couple?"

"Handsome, certainly, but—"

"And Count Rosano is very amiable also."

"Yes, very, but—"

"Rich, accomplished."

"All that you say!" exclaimed de Courcy impatiently, "but still I do not think them suited to each other."

"And pray, my lord, who do you think would suit Miss Shafton?"

The Earl felt embarrassed, though he could not help smiling at Lucy's half roguish, half serious manner. "It is easier," he replied, "to say who would *not*, than who would suit Miss Shafton. I suppose Miss Maitland we must leave her to judge for herself."

"Well parried!" thought Lucy; but, bent on tormenting, she continued—

"Now I differ from you entirely with respect to Count Rosano! I think him admirably suited for Miss Shafton, and, were it not that I have determined that she shall have nothing but a whole heart—aye, and a sound one too—Do you think it possible, my Lord, for a man to love more than one?"

"I think not, Miss Maitland; that is when he has truly loved."

"But, behold those lazy people; they have

actually seated themselves!" she pointed to Grace and Rosano, who had rested some distance below. The Count is really very attentive to her, is he not? I hope he is not going to prove inconstant to his first love! I believe the Italians are not famed for constancy."

"On the contrary," replied the Earl, who, though he gave a shrewd guess that Lucy was amusing herself at his expense, yet could not help feeling annoyed. "On the contrary, Miss Maitland, when truly attached, they are most constant. They are absolutely famed for constancy. Look at Petrarch, for instance."

"But it is doubted whether he ever really loved the immortalized Laura."

"Oh, Miss Maitland, how can you doubt that such divine poetry was inspired by the passion it paints in such glowing yet pure colours?"

"Well, I will not argue the point with you; but, now, what would you advise us to do? Count Rosano and his companion certainly do not intend to ascend to us."

"Then I should suggest that we descend to them."

"What, and interrupt their *tête à tête*?"

"Nay, if it be your pleasure to remain here."

"What, to finish your penance? But no, I fear that Falkland will be jealous, if he observe how attentive Count Rosano is to Miss Shafton; so, out of compassion, I must interrupt them," and, with a malicious laugh, she bounded off to join Grace.

What a strange thing is love! not half an hour since, and de Courcy was pleased to see Grace under the care of Rosano; he would have beheld her with any one rather than with Falkland. Now, on the contrary, he looked on the attentions of his friend with a jealous and uneasy eye. He panted for an opportunity of explaining his conduct to Grace. What must she think of him? Still, his heart was lightened of an intolerable load; and, as he hastened to overtake Lucy, he felt an elation of spirit to which he had long been a stranger.

Lucy, still bent on mischief, took her seat by Grace, for no other reason than to prevent the Earl doing so. She took up his attention, and would not give him a moment's time either to speak to, or look at any one else; and, finally, rallied her friend on her sudden fatigue; hinting that she feared they had disturbed an agreeable *tête à tête.* Thus she went on, until, at last, Grace, looking at her in unfeigned astonishment, remarked playfully.

"This mountain air is too exhilirating for you, Lucy, so, we will, if you please, descend."

De Courcy would have given worlds to have offered his arm to Grace, but Rosano assisted her to rise, and she took his arm without hesitation.

"Come my lord, your penance is almost over!" cried Lucy.

"It is a penance that I shall remember with pleasure, the longest day I live."

"You may compliment with safety now, and I do not thank you for it," replied Lucy pre-

tending not to understand him; and de Courcy was really at a loss to know whether she had, or had not, discovered his secret.

Suddenly, Rosano quickening his pace, and lantrying Grace forward, exclaimed, "We must hasten. The storm, the storm, de Courcy! quick, quick, or it will overtake us!" They redoubled their speed, although Lucy could see no indication of the coming tempest. Rosano, however, was right; a small cloud, which he had observed upon the border of the horizon, now seemed to dilate and spread over the whole sky. The atmosphere became dense and oppressive, and the mysterious stillness, which precedes a thunder storm, pervaded the air. The tempest whispered in the caves along the margin of the lake, whose waters heaved like a bosom, bitterly wronged, that swells indignantly against the oppressor. Big spots of rain fell heavily at measured intervals, and the humid grass trembled like the silken coat of a thorough bred steed, apprehensive of danger. As our party

entered the house, the opening peal of thunder announced that the storm had commenced. Sudden, fierce, and tumultuous, a rush of winds swept down from the chain of mountains, instantaneously covering the lake with surf, which the huge waves, beating one against another, cast at the stooping clouds. Now, a forked flash of lightning, blue, vivid, and slender, was struck from Heaven, and almost instantly, followed by the o'erhanging thunder —crash, crash after crash, tearing the brooding clouds into shreds, and perfecting echoes out of every hollow and hill. Then came the sharp shrieks of the loosed winds—and then might be seen the danger of the watery way. Like swarms of sack-promised besiegers, whom the hope of plunder—that most exciting of all hopes —maddens into fury, the waters leaped up in a thousand waves.

"See," cried Rosano, "how quick at discovering a storm our boatmen of the lake are! There is not a single bark to be seen on its tossing bosom."

"Thank God for that!" said Mrs. Stanhope.

Suddenly, Grace (who was watching the awful scene from the window) exclaimed. "Look, look, there is still a boat! It appears to be the sport of the tempest! oh, heaven! its crew will all be lost,—they must perish!"

A boat, with three persons in it, was now plainly observed making vain attempts to reach the shore.

"There are four men in her, I think," remarked De Courcy, who was using a small telescope, "three of them seem to know what they are about, and exert themselves manfully; but the fourth appears to be utterly incapable of exertion: probably he is overcome by fear. But soft, he is an old man! I can plainly see his gray hair! Perhaps he is too old and weak to lend any assistance. Oh, God, he lifts his hands repeatedly to Heaven! Poor fellow, he is terribly afflicted—he has children depending on him! Falkland, Rosano, let us hasten, and see if it be possible to render any assistance!"

"Do not, do not," cried Mrs. Stanhope, "I

will send the domestics!" But ere she could finish the sentence, her friends were making their way to the spot at which the boat was most likely to come on shore.

Mrs. Stanhope immediately dispatched some of the servants.

"See," exclaimed Lucy, "there is some one there before them!"

"It is Larry!" said Grace, "I should know the waving of his hat from a thousand. I am glad he is with *him!*"

Grace was not aware that, in her anxiety, she had betrayed *who* was uppermost in her thoughts. But, fortunately, the ejaculation was heard only by Lucy.

Larry, who had been the first to observe the dangerous position of the boat, with his characteristic humanity, was trying to give notice, by waving his hat, of the nearest and safest place to land. But it was in vain that the oarsmen, with almost supernatural strength,

bent themselves to their task; the winds and the waves, united to contend with their endeavours.

"Now, my boys, now!" shouted Larry, at the top of his voice, in broad English; but it was all the same to those he hailed, as though he had spoken in the purest Italian. They heard nothing but the fierce whistling wind, they saw nothing but the opposing waves.

"Now ye divils—pull out! there's life and liberty for you yet!—Bate the wathers like min,—think nothin' of 'em, an' you'll make nothin' of 'em! Oh, Christ, they'll be all washed out of her!—Oh, mother o' marcy be lanient to 'em. They're bowld brave boys, an' workin' like Irishmen, an' take that into consideration, an' I'll honour you for iver! An' remimber how I've kept the fait safe and fast amidst a variety of reformations, and in the prisince o' the mightiest bishops an' curates o' the land. Look how Dr. Squeezetithe sarved me whin I crossed myself in the middle aisle—an' how I left the church sooner than not pray in my own

way, an' as I ought. Think, think, holy mother, how I was excommunicated from the lithurgy, all for my love an' b'lief in you; an' now, hear me this day, an' be marciful to these struggling cratures!"

At this moment, a wave struck the boat with such violence that she instantly capsized.

"There," cried Larry, in tones of reproof, "there, holy mother, you've kilt 'em! It's all over with 'em! Now, plaze to have more marcy for their sowls than you had for their mortial bodies. Oh, my lord," addressing his master, who had now arrived, "it's wathery corpses they are in a minit."

"Not so," exclaimed de Courcy, "they may yet be saved. See, they swim towards the shore."

In fact, three men were descried, two of them stoutly contending with the fury of the waves; the third tossed about as if in sport. Ropes were thrown, and every assistance rendered; and the assembled party soon had the satisfaction of seeing the two former safely landed.

"Well, boys, jewdie! I have you; you're safe now, any how, though you've had a bit of a rumble for it!" And Larry helped to support one of them. De Courcy approached the other, who, though considerably older than his companion, seemed better able to bear the hardships they had undergone. He sat, his elbows upon his knees, and his eyes fixed on the dashing waters.

"All gone, boat and all! and the one, that was to have rewarded us, perished!" he exclaimed in a hoarse, sullen voice.

"Come, my friend," said de Courcy, "you had better think of drying yourself, and getting some refreshment; and then, we will see what's to be done to make up for your losses."

"Many thanks, Signor, many thanks too for your kind assistance," said the man, looking round upon the assembled group.

"You have lost one of your party I fear; I have not seen him rise since the boat upset."

"Yes, Signor, he is gone! He that was to

have given us our reward. Before we embarked, I apprised him that we should have foul weather, but he offered to pay us handsomely, and I thought we might, by exerting our utmost, escape the storm. He was a brave fellow, however, and displayed both energy and courage, in comparison to the other, who, though gray-headed, seems to have strength enough, if he had but courage enough to exert it. If it hadn't been for his enormous carcase, we should have landed long ago. Yet, instead of helping, he did nothing but cry, and wring his hands, and turn up his eyes to heaven; though, from what little he said to me, before sailing, he appeared no such saint either."

As he spoke, the huge body of a man was heaved on the shore, in such a manner as suggested the idea that the billows were glad to get rid of it. Larry sprang to the spot, to prevent the returning wave from washing it back into the deep. Dragging it, as well as he could, to terra firma, he turned it on the back, and unloosed the neckcloth. What was his

astonishment, to recognise the full-blown features of Mr. Elshender Mc Walker.

"Holy mother, forgive me for my accusin' of you jist now! Sure, I see the raison of it all! this hathen hathiest provoked your timper, an' consiquince is, you sent a storm upon him! My lord, my lord come hither; here's a discovery! Look there, my lord! that's the mortal remains—and God knows there's plenty of 'em—of that defaming divil, Mc Walker!"

"Well, Larry, this is not the time to remember his crimes. Try if you can discover any signs of life in him. Bad as he is, we must not let him perish for want of aid!"

As he spoke, Mc Walker sneezed very perceptibly half a dozen times; his little eyes blinked, and his mouth gave vent to a small torrent, like a water-pipe playing in the streets of London.

"What a capacious bread basket he has!" exclaimed Larry, "the lake will never come to high wather mark agin! Hark, how he's fitching breath to help him out with the remaining

bucket full! He's safe to live, my lord, as a babby born with teeth in his two jaws!"

Mc Walker, having thoroughly relieved himself, muttered a few unconnected exclamations, such as, "God, God, my Saviour and Redeemer, mercy, mercy, oh, me-er-cy!"

"The Lord forgive us," cried Larry, as he forced a little brandy down his throat. "The Lord forgive us, what a thing it is to set up for singularity, an' being a hatheist! Look at this bloated an boashting abortion, calling for marcy to the powers he backbites and crucifies agin and agin, in the broad daylight of life! Whisht, he's come to himself."

Mc Walker, whose mind, never slow at perceiving anything which might turn to his advantage, now caught the idea that he was safe, raised himself on his elbow, and favoured Larry with a stare. Apparently not over and above pleased with the first essay, he rubbed his eyes, and again commenced his observation.

"Shtare away, Mr. Mc Walker, shtare away; it's myself, Larry Monaghan, regarding

of you with feelings of commisherableness. Is it dumb you are, alagh? can't you thry your hand at a bit o' palaver, at all, at all? It's mighty surprised you must be, Mr. Mc Walker, whin it's incapable of spakin you are!"

"Forgive me, my dear sir," returned Mr. Mc Walker, who now contrived to sit upright, and was determined to face it out. "Recent circumstances, I am sure, will partly excuse my not having instantly recognised you. I rejoice to see you so well; and I thank God, not so much for my safety, as that I find you instrumental in effecting it. I am, indeed, deeply grateful to you, and to that gentleman, in whom I hope I shall find sympathy for my affliction. And may I enquire if Mr. Talbot be saved? I had, unfortunately, entrusted to his care a large sum of money, without which, I protest to God, I might as well have perished; for, if he be lost, I shall be totally unprovided with means in a foreign country!" and he whimpered like a baulked babe.

"Who did you say? Talbo

with you in that bit of a punt? why thin, how could he thrust himself in sich a cockle shell, with sich a comrade; as if his own weight o' wickedness warn't sufficient to drown him? An' you 'bove all animal products! why the 'Great Western' itself, couldn't float you!"

"Ah, sir, it was an evil hour in which I met that bold bad man! He tampered with me, and supplied me with excuses for all that he wished me to perform for him. I, at first, spurned his offers with contempt; I told him to leave me, and never more to insult me by such proposals. For some time, he obeyed. He kept his villanous devices hidden; but, by slow and impalpable degrees, he produced them one after the other; undermining my determination, when he saw me off my guard; ingratiating himself with me until I really became attached to him, and alas, whenever my feelings get interested for a person, I am too apt to sacrifice my own strong sense of right to indulge their inclination! He gained his point! In an un-

guarded moment—out of mere friendship for him—I promised to fulfil his request. I need not tell you how the matter subsequently terminated;—but, I may say with truth that, I have since paid dearly for my fault. Tears of burning contrition have poured perpetually from my eyes. The least thing, the merest trifle has melted me! If a finger were held up at me—a sight—a touch—or a sound—I have burst into an extreme of agony. My life, since then, has been one scene of unchanging suffering! My presence here proves it; for this journey has been undertaken for the sole purpose of thus casting myself at Lord de Courcy's feet, and humbly begging his pardon for my culpable weakness! From this rock I cannot rise, until your lordship has sealed my absolution."

The manner of Larry had told Mr. Walker who his second auditor was.

"Rise, sir," replied de Courcy contemptuously, "you are, as you ever must be, beneath my resentment! You were but the mean and

abject tool of another. I can acquit you, certainly, of entering into the plot against my happiness with any other idea than that of personal emolument; you knew me not, you could not feel an animosity against me. Rise, sir, unless you wish to pay your homage of gratitude to that God, who has preserved you from a sudden and horrible death!"

"He, he, he, my lord," and Mr. Mc Walker deliberately arose, "surely, your lordship is far too enlightened to consider that there was any thing, beyond the concurring of mere possibilities, in the preservation of so insignificant a thing as one solitary human being. Trust me, my lord, the wise know better than to mix up spirituality with their individuality!"

"Hear him, ye guardians o' the world, how he blasphames! Howld your tongue you baste, do; you're not safe yet." (Mr. Mc Walker changed colour; the very mention of danger unmanned him,) "Now I'd have you take a bit of advice, Elshander—jist walk your moun-

[illegible]

[illegible] of these parts, in as small a quantity of time as you consider worth makin' use of to save yourself from being lost in a handy! Nor, 'tis plannin' that same in my mind I am, Mr. De Walker; an' there are lots of handy chaps about, willin' to oblige in any diversion of such a nature."

"My lord, to you as one in authority, as one powerful to save or to condemn, as one, whose character for benevolence and philanthropy has called for the notice of an entire community—to you I appeal. I beseech, my lord, that you will kindly interpose, and preserve me from the indignities which are deducible from your servant's sentiments. Here, cast by the boisterous billows, solitary and destitute, wet and famished, heart-sick from disappointment, and feeble from suffering, I do hope and trust, my lord, to meet that kindness at your hands, which such as your lordship ought readily to render. My lord, I therefore throw myself on your clemency. I am in danger, I am in want!—

what more to stir the benevolence of your heart? A loan of a few pounds, my lord, would be thankfully accepted, and gratefully returned on my arrival in England. If your lordship refuse, a wife, an only child, whose welfare and intellectual cultivation lie close at my heart, and who, I rejoice to say, promises to repay, in a wonderful degree, the love and care with which I favour him—this boy, this noble boy, will lose the opportunities which I waste my energies to procure for him; he will perish for want of mental fuel, and the wife, before mentioned, of my bosom for lack of bodily! They will go out like unfed lamps, and leave the world to darkness and despair; for that boy, my lord, has a developement of mental formation as singular, as it is sure to be successful in the profundity of investigation."

"Cease, sir, cease!" said the Earl calmly. "This language may weigh with the undiscerning; but it requires no great effort to read its purport. I see you in a position, which I

should readily pity, and endeavour to relieve, but under circumstances obviously suspicious. You admit being in company with Mr. Talbot—you must have known of his recent capture as a felon and assassin—interrupt me not, sir, I will justify the conduct I am about to pursue. I weigh your words against your actions, and I find them far opposed. I can read countenances, also, and in yours there is palpable betrayal of the villany of your heart. I conclude from thence that the intention of your journey to this place, in the company of my bitter and dastardly enemy, was decidedly hostile; and, as I see little credit in continuing to bear aggression after aggression, I will plainly tell you that, even if my servant were to put his threat into execution, I should not pity your case!"

"My lord, my lord, I regret, I grieve deeply that your mind is biassed—so unhappily biassed against a repentant heart—remember, my lord, *a repentant heart!* I cannot yet believe that you will see me depart without retracting the cruel—

pardon me, unfounded, and deeply injurious view you hold of my character. My lord, *my* word is sacred. Let me but once promise—once assent to, or once hint a matter—I am bound by my word, my assent, or my hint. There is no power of sufficient force to shake my given faith. I have said, my lord, that I travelled hither to beg your lordship's forgiveness, for an injury which I have ever since regretted; and which, having unfortunately given my assent to conduct, I was, of course, fast fixed to perform. I have told your lordship this—it is true as wisdom! Would that I could prove it by palpable testimony! would that the written testimony of my determination, which I endorsed to the deceased Talbot, could be produced—then, then, indeed, your lordship would remove the branding stigma of your condemnation from an unhappy yet innocent man! But alas, that can never be!"

While he was yet speaking, as if the lake had sickened at his falsehood, the waves cast the

body of Talbot within a few roods of his feet! Struck conscious with "conviction horrible," he shrank from the corpse; and observing that Larry instantly busied himself in searching the pockets of the deceased, and in handing some papers to his master, who at once commenced perusing them, he made a bolt precipitate, and effected a retreat as sudden as it was secure*.

The papers found on the body of Talbot, con- the *materiel* of one of the most monstrous schemes of villany ever planned; and the rules of action betrayed the penmanship of Mc Walker. Their purport was to the following effect.

On their arrival at Bellagio, they were to request, under a feigned name, an interview with de Courcy, at a particular spot by the shore; proposing, as an inducement, an express of a

* Mr. Mac Walker's character will be more fully investigated in a forthcoming publication. As it is in the nature of disposed events that such an individual should make a patibulary exit, the authoress, though aware of departing from a grand rule of composition in reserving an actor, yet decides to await the event of justice rather than to anticipate it.

secret nature from the Count Tebaldi. When the victim appeared, Mc Walker, being unknown to the Earl, was to keep him in conversation during the interval that Talbot should prepare to molest him; and, when the former perceived Talbot about to make his attack, he was to grasp de Courcy round the body, whilst the latter made his arms fast with a strong rope. They were then to strip him of whatever valuables he had on his person, and fling him into the lake, first, however, knocking him on the head, and untying his arms, so as to remove the impression of his having met with violence; thus securing themselves from suspicion, and, as the writer, indulging in a facetious conclusion, expressed it—"enjoy the reward of successful courage in calm security, forgetting the cause in the appreciation of it's effects."

When Larry was made acquainted with the contents of this paper, his rage expressed itself in the most violent manner. He stamped—cursed—wept—and tore his hair ferociously.

"Oh, thunder, turf, an' fury! Oh, williloo! Oh, Larry Monaghan, idjit an' ape! Why did you let him go, you bosthoon? What can you say for yourself, you gommul? Where was your head, you Omadhoun? Go an' hide it, go an' hide it for iver! Bury it in a wran-bush *

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* A holly bush, decorated with wrens and dead mice, carried about by the villagers on St. Stephen's day.

This curious custom is, evidently, but the remnant of some festival, instituted previous to the introduction of christianity in Ireland. All, save the present title of the day on which it is solemnized, serves to confirm that position. The following are a few verses of the chaunt performed on this occasion, corrupted, doubtless, from a more worthy original:—

The wran, the wran, the king of all birds!
On St. Stephen's day he was caught in the furze;
And though he is little, his fortune is great,
And we pray ye, good people, to give him a thrate.

An' if you give him of the best,
We hope in Heaven your sowls will rest;
But if you give him of the small,
It wont agree with the boys at all!

Last Sathurday night a turnin' the spit,
I burned my finger, I feels it yet;
Betwuxt my finger an' my thumb,
There is a blisther as big as a plumb.

But shake the green holly, an' drown melancholy!
To keep a cowld Chris'mas it is but a folly;
An' the cutest o' ways to lengthen our days,
Is to ate an' to dhrink, and to laugh all aways! &c. &c.

for a 'cock shy,' do, you gull o' the world; an' let the little childer make divarsion of it, for it arn't sinsible enough to reside on a pair of shoulders! To go for to let him go! oh, sacred mother! to go for to let him go! ah! I'm sowl sick at it." And he was bidding fair to be bald.

"Nay, Larry, compose yourself!" suggested de Courcy. "It is much better that the wretched slave should escape."

"Yes, to go a killin' yer honour agin! Now, listen to me," he continued, falling on his knees, and lifting his eyes and hands solemnly to the sky. "Listen to me, all ye clargymen

---

Mr. Moore has it :--

> "—the best of all ways,
> To lengthen our days,
> Is to steal a few hours from night, my dear!"

Which, we humbly conceive to be no better than a 'beautiful bull,' not so wise as the last couplet of the St. Stephen's caolr, but far more poetical.

> "Early to bed, and early to rise,
> Makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise."

as Poor Richard says.

and laymen of Heaven, all ye indulgent stars, constellations, an' planets, an', particularly, ye phosphorical-tailed comets—listen to me quiet and noticeable. If iver I lay my two eyes on that great unhanged hog, an' let him 'scape out o' my two hands—which I wish were just doubled for his sake—come down on me, all of you, every mother's son, an' make a hidjus affair o' me intirely, according to the best o' your abilities! I'm asy now!" and, so saying, he arose, and quietly followed his master, as if he had risen from a soft and quiet slumber.

Whilst this scene was going on, Falkland and Rosano had been attending to the two poor boatmen. They were now returning after having seen them lodged, and taken care of in one of the cottages. They were struck with horror and astonishment on learning what had happened; and both severely blamed de Courcy for having allowed the wretch to escape. Leaving to the peasants to inter the miserable Talbot, upon whose person so small a sum of

money was found, that it was conjectured whatever he had possessed must have been in the keeping of Mc Walker, they returned to the house.

"At last!" cried Lucy, as they entered. "We have been awaiting you most impatiently; the more so, since the evening drew in, and that we were no longer able to observe your proceedings. We saw, however, that you had succeeded in saving the men."

"All but one," answered Falkland, "and since that one was not worthy to live, there is no cause to regret that he met his death by the judgment of the Almighty."

"Who was he, then? did you know him?"

In spite of de Courcy's significant looks, Falkland related the whole affair.

Mrs. Stanhope held up her hands in astonishment and horror; and Lucy was loud in her exclamations. Grace turned so pale, that de Courcy, who was intently observing her, with difficulty restrained himself from clasping her

to his heart. She turned one glance towards him during Falkland's relation, but, finding his eyes fixed upon her, made an effort to conceal her emotion.

"I have provided accommodation for yourself and Count Rosano, for the night;" said Mrs. Stanhope," for I shall not think of your returning."

"Thank you," replied de Courcy, "we must not, certainly, think of returning by the lake to night; but we might go by land: the distance is not so very considerable."

"Yes," observed Lucy, "and be way-laid by that dreadful man Mc Walker! But we do not mean to give him the chance; so you may make yourself perfectly easy on that score. You are a prisoner, I assure you!"

"If so, believe me I am a most willing one!" replied the Earl playfully. "Not that I have any thing to fear from Mc. Walker. Now, that he has lost his more courageous associate, he will be glad to get out of the way as soon as

possible. Let us, however, turn from the contemplation of such unpleasant characters. You will, I am sure, Miss Maitland, give us a song; or my friend Rosano will assist you in a duo. You have not yet discovered his powers as a musician."

De Courcy's suggestion was immediately adopted, and the evening passed cheerfully away. But, in vain he sought the eyes of Grace;—in vain he endeavoured to place himself by her side. She avoided his glance, she retreated at his approach. Though she did not refuse his offered hand, when he bade her good night; yet as he gently pressed it, he thought the blush that rose to her cheek, had in it more of anger than of love. Nor was he mistaken! The slightest alteration in his manner was perceived by Grace: she saw that he had sought her eyes: she was aware that she had been an object of attention to him all the evening; but she was determined no longer to be the sport of, what she considered, his fickle-

ness. Therefore she baffled his endeavours to approach her.

Lucy had given up her room to one of the gentlemen, and was to pass the night with Grace. As the friends retired to rest, Lucy observed—

"How very agreeable Lord de Courcy was to-night. Did you not think so?"

"I certainly did observe that he took more pains than usual to amuse; and suppose I must attribute it to your influence. You are a strange mad-cap, Lucy; but take care that Falkland be not jealous."

"Oh, if he were to dare to be jealous, I should punish him! But I have no fear; and, as to my mad-cap freaks, never mind them, they answer my purpose sometimes. For instance, I have discovered a secret!"

"Indeed?"

"Indeed yes."

"Something wonderful, no doubt."

"Are you curious?"

"Of course."

"Then, I will tell you! I have discovered the reason of de Courcy's coolness to Falkland."

"And pray what is it?"

"What do you think of jealousy?"

Grace, who did not for a moment imagine that de Courcy could be ignorant of Lucy's engagement to Falkland, looked at her in some surprise; and, for the first time in her life, thought that her friend was misled by vanity. She had never seen any thing in de Courcy's manner towards Lucy, to warrant a suspicion that he was attached to her; not knowing to what the latter alluded, concluded that she was certainly deceived in her conclusions.

"Well," observed Lucy, seeing her look of astonishment and incredulity, "you do not appear to give me much credit for my discovery!"

"Not much, certainly."

"Then I will not tell you another word about it."

"I fear, dear Lucy, said Grace, trying to smile, "that I shall not sleep from disappointment."

"And, perhaps," thought Lucy, "if I were to tell you the whole of my secret, you would not sleep from a more agreeable sensation. So, I will leave the Earl to make his own explanations, which I shall be much deceived, should he lose any considerable time in doing!"

CHAPTER X.

De Courcy, who found the sudden revolution in his hopes almost as difficult to support as his former state of despair, was stirring with the light. He strolled into the air; and, without losing sight of the house, wandered to and fro, contemplating the now peaceful lake and its surrounding scenery. His bosom was far from partaking of the quiet which reigned around. A few minutes had served to dissipate an allusion that had cost him a year of misery. But now, was it not dissipated too late? Dared he hope that Grace still loved him? He looked at the ring, which he had ever worn near his heart, and his hopes rose; but, when

he passed in review her late conduct, her extreme coldness, her determined avoidance of him, those hopes were cast to the ground. "No," he sorrowfully ejaculated, "she has never once allowed her eyes to rest upon me, she has torn me as one utterly unworthy from her heart. She long borne with me; tended me on my bed of sickness; watched with anxiety my returning health; but my coldness and apparent ingratitude have at last wearied her, and she thinks no more of me!" As he stood, thus fluctuating between hope and fear, determining that, ere the day had passed, his fate should be decided, and anxiously watching to observe if Grace issued from the house, he was interrupted by Larry, who came running to tell him, that the party were assembled in the breakfast-room.

"Well, Miss Maitland," asked the Earl, with a significant look," what is to be my penance for to-day? That of yesterday proved so efficacious that I am anxious to put myself in your hands again."

What, are you positively going to give us the

pleasure of your company all day? Come, I see my penance has indeed had a good effect!" and she looked archly at him.

"Now, that is an unkind question: it looks as if you did not wish my society."

"On the contrary, I am delighted; and was only a little surprised."

"Yet, now that you have reminded me of my duty, I fear I must indeed go; my sister will be uneasy," said de Courcy, as they entered the breakfast-room

"If that be all," observed Mrs. Stanhope, "it need not prevent your stay; for we will immediately despatch a messenger. So, if you will but say agree, we will plan some little excursion for the day."

"I cannot resist," replied the Earl, and a servant was forthwith sent off to the Palazzo de' Rinucci.

"And now," said Lucy, "for your penance! You shall point out what is most worthy of our attention."

"You have not yet visited Como, I think?"

"No."

"Then, by all means, you must visit it. The cathedral is worthy of attention, and has some very fine paintings. Indeed, most of the churches and palaces are enriched by the arts."

The affair was soon settled, and Mrs. Stanhope bustled out to give directions for the packing of provisions, &c., as they had decided to dine under the shade of the trees.

"Ah, Larry," exclaimed she, as she met that ever officious personage who was just now indulging Jessy with an account of the last evening's proceedings; and describing his favorite Mr. Mc Walker in glowing colors. "Larry, you are the very person I want!" and she detailed to him the plan for the day, and required his assistance in packing the refreshments.

"Why thin, ma'am, if it don't conthravant your own intintion, I would be bowld to insist, that the best way of doin' all that relates to the

spreading of the cowld collection, is jist to lave it to Jessy an' myself, an' the boy Gam—Gam bother it—I mane, ma'am the cratar that's called, as they tell me, John the Baptist, (and he crossed himself.) We'll forestal you, ma'am, an' crosh the wather subsiquintly; an' find out a nice shady spot, an' see that every idintical arrangemint, proper and convanient, be secured for you, ma'am dear."

Mrs. Stanhope could not help admiring Larry's cunning, in trying to get his sweetheart included in the arrangements; but, as he was a great favorite, and she saw no objection to the proposal, she allowed Larry to have his own way. It was agreed that he and Jessy should (as he said) precede them subsiquintly.

When this truly happy couple landed on the opposite bank, Larry's first care was, with the help of Giambattista, to stow the wines and refreshments in the coolest spot he could find. He then sought for a fitting retreat, where to prepare the collation; and having found a

beautiful nook shaded by the pine, the ilex, the laurel, and the orange, he carried Jessy to it in triumph; and, having directed Giambattista to take care of the hampers, &c., he thought he could not better employ the time than in what he called "coorting."

Passing a disparaging, we might say contemptuous, judgment on the scene that was spread before them.

"There," he exclaimed, starting up, and pointing a finger towards Mount Ce'ramede, "what do you see now Jessy dear, in that tall ungainly hill, that a rasonable philosopher would call purty? I purtest to Heaven, there aint the feeding of a jackass upon it! Ah, Jessy, blue eyed perfection of mine, if I had ye in ould Ireland—may the prisince of marcy continue the jews that bathe it all night, an' the suns that make it shine an' sprout like a *Roryro dandarum* all day—if I had you there Jessy, my charmer, it's a shower o' joyous emotions you'd be afther feelin', at the sight o'

the vardint an' sacred imininces, where the wild ponies, an' the goats, an' the sheep, an' the fluttherin' squirrels, an' rabbits, an' hares, clurikaun's, banshees, an' tindherist fairies, and—oh, Jessy, jewel o' my sowl, that's the locatin' risidince for a vargin girl like yourself!"

"La's me, Larry, what a wonderful place it must be!" exclaimed Jessy, opening her eyes with astonishment, at his description. "How I should like to see it—for, indeed, Larry I've no heart for the continent; and I don't see any use in all this travelling to see wild foreigners and uninhabitable places."

"I didn't injure you by consaving as much, darlint! Sure it isn't you, with your eyes jist like an Irish sky—meltin an' moist, an' dangerous, from which the natives are glad to make a pricipitit rethrate—an' with your cheeks inflamed by health and youth, an' kept in complixion by the suggistions of a susciptible heart; it isn't a composition of all that's adorable and tangible in nathur, that would

thravil for excitemint, into sich rude an' unsocial climates as this. Howsomiver, where one's spirit is sunk dead with misfortune and affliction —as was the case with poor Cornelius O'Sullivan—I *can* account for immigration. An', faith an' throth, Jessy, the same Conny Sullivan had a mighty black fate of it! He was a nice hale boy, with a comely countenance and an illigint figger; as light as a cork, and as handy as a *connaugh*. Sich a boy for hurley, or a game o' bowls, wasn't privilint in the whole county! Well, 'twas to fall in love he did, with sweet Mary Mc Shane, an' extramely lovely an' a partiklar well mannered young 'oman, who lived within a sthone's jerk of him. Well, to make a long story short, an,' consiquintly, more amusin,' he axed her to renounce the name o' Mc Shane, an' to go by that of O'Sullivan; an' afther some little coaxin, she consinted. Well, they were made man an' wife, and happiness bamed about 'em for the matther o' tin months, as the song says, which I will prafix to this

milancholy sthory, when, alack alalum, she went dead of a day, in givin' production to a bit of a babby, that would'nt live without her, an' hurried out o' life afther her in no time! Well, by coorse, he wandered away, no one knows where; an' if it warn't for the song, that I'm goin' for to sing for you, the world o' lithurature would niver have missed him. Listen then, darlint, for here goes!" and in a fine, vigorous and not unmelodious voice, Larry delivered himself of the following ballad:—

A LAMENT.

"Oh, the sun is divarting himself in the meadows,
With playfully driving the summer clouds' shadows!
And the green corn is waving, bekase of the wind,
Which is racing and chasing before and behind!

The streames are a coursing, like childer a running,
And making a sound that's more soothing than stunning:
I do know how it is, but their innocent singing
Insinsible tears to my eyelids is bringing!

It makes me to drame of the land far away,
'First flower o' the earth and first jim o' the say!'
Where the strames are more fraquintly runnin' than here,
Bekase there's more rain to supply them, my dear!

Oh, 'tis there, every mornin', the larks and the thrushes
Awaken ould nature from two currant bushes;
But, in this artificial and countin'-house climate,
Each bird is as dull as a premier or primate!

There's a nate little cabin in Carigaline,
Round whose walls and whose windys the rock roses twine;
And, barring the time when the frosts' on the ground,
The running of rills makes an ixquisite sound.

There's a little green hillock forenint the front doore,
For which the bright sun has a fancy, I'm sure;
For even in winther, if there's but one beam
In his iligant eye, it is there it'll gleam!

'Twas a vargin of loveliness, Mary Mac Shane,
Whose people resort in the conjoining lane:
So modest was she, so unconscious of art,
That she niver left off till she captured my heart!

And when we got married---for married we were---
I found, sure enough, I'd a treasure in her!
For, constant, and careful, and willin' was she,
And her sole occipation was lovin' o' me!

But, sure, 'twas too sweet, and it wasn't to last!
For, jist as tin months were gone over and past,
And I was expectin' a babby to kiss,
My child and my Mary were taken to bliss!

I was jist like a maniac, savage and wild;
I towld them they'd murthered my wife and my child---
I broke from them all, and sailed over the main,
And niver went home to my cottage again!

And now, all alone, o'er the wide world I wander;
I've nobody here, an' I've nobody yonder!
My head it is gray, and my heart it is w'ary,
And I long to lie down in the grave with my Mary!"

At this moment, the gondola, with the company, moored on the strand, beneath where our lovers were sitting. Larry, who had a perfect view of the lake, and who now beheld the landing of the party, started to his feet to notice the direction they took. To his surprise and astonishment, he saw his master hand Miss Shafton from the boat, and himself conduct her forward. His joy was intense; he strained, in an alarming manner, over the edge of the rock, exclaiming to Jessy.

"Hurraw, Jessy, victhroy! The de Coorcy's and the o' Shafton's for iver! The masther is linked arm in arm, accordin' to the rules of proximating mortials, with the mistress dear, an' they're manfully battlin' the ascint together —God bless 'em—Hurraw! why don't ye shout Jessy? Sure, it's a whole family union will happen afther this. Shout out, ye divil—darling, I mane!"

Jessy, taking hold of his coat flaps, and dragging with all her might, cried out, "Larry,

Larry, you'll fall over! Dear Larry, you will be over—take care, take care!"

"'Hut, tut, and syllabub!' that aint in the book o' fate for this day, any how! I might walk on the air or the wather, or any of the other revolving ilimants,—as St. Peter the turnkay of Heaven did, in christian times—an' they'd howld me up dhry an' airy. An', by jingo, I would'nt matther the trial this minit, if I were in the land I love! But here, there aint any peth in the wind, or any resistince in the wather—God keep us! An' so," he continued, turning suddenly round, and heartily hugging his companion, "I don't see the divarsion there'd be in the attimpt!" And having almost smothered her with kisses, he released her, saying—"There young 'oman, there's airnest o' what's in resarve for you!—for, from this day out, I'll niver molest a female in that fashin agin; but approximate myself to you, mornin', noon, an' night, if so be you aint a goin to object to the appoint-

ment? Speak out, with a clare, distinct, and obsarvible tonation, do!"—

Before Jessy found breath or courage to reply, the approach of Lord de Courcy and Grace Shafton, put an end to the conversation.

"Whisht, whisht, Jessy, darlin', let em pass! They won't see us; their eyes are too much obscured by emotion!—Sure, I tould you!—Look, they're takin' that conthrary coorse into the mist o' that laurel grove. 'It's all right,' as the fly said, when he got out the cobwig."

And away went Larry, to accost Mrs. Stanhope, and see if she approved of the spot he had fixed upon, for preparing the refreshments.

We must now return to our party, in order to explain how de Courcy, notwithstanding Grace's avoidance of him, managed to appropriate her to himself. Aided by Lucy, in whom he had a powerful, though unacknowledged, auxiliary, he contrived to seat himself by Grace, and arranged the cushions for her in the most approved fashion. Any little attention from

him was now a matter of surprise, for, he had, invariably, left her to the care of others. But Grace was determined not to be moved. 'He had, already,' she thought, 'treated her with sufficient caprice: and she would now be on her guard.'

The little party chatted gaily. De Courcy, free from the cloud that had so long hung over him, renewed all his frankness with Falkland; and the latter, who really esteemed him, became still more cheerful than usual.

Grace, alone, was sad;—she was unusually so. The unbidden tear stole to her eye; and she had considerable difficulty in concealing the melancholy that oppressed her. How gladly would she have welcomed solitude! She envied her companions; and felt at the moment almost unable to sympathise in their happiness. She was angry with de Courcy for thus, as it seemed to her, thrusting himself into her company. His gaiety appeared like a mockery of her own sadness; and yet, there was a solici-

tude in his look and manner towards her, which, in spite of her endeavours at indifference, could not fail to move her.

Lucy observed her friend's sadness, and exerted herself in order that it might pass unnoticed.

They had now arrived at the opposite side; and, in disembarking, it required all de Courcy's management to preserve his station by Grace; for Rosano, seeing that Falkland had given his arm to Lucy, seemed to think, that as a matter of course, Grace would fall to his share. He stayed, therefore, to hand her from the boat; but, de Courcy jumping out also, stood on the other side, and as her foot touched the ground, he, without ceremony, drew her arm through his; and bidding his friend assist Mrs. Stanhope, proceeded to follow Lucy and Falkland. His movement had been so sudden and decided, that Grace had scarcely time to think; but, when she found her arm within his, her astonishment was only equalled by her emotion; and

in spite of her efforts, she trembled and could scarcely proceed. De Courcy was conscious of her agitation; and such is the nature of man he felt reassured by it. Without, however, appearing to notice her emotion, he tenderly assisted her; and remarking on the beauties of the surrounding scenery,—

"We will stop for a moment to observe it from hence," he said, finding that she proceeded with difficulty. He then pointed out the different villas and Palazzi, telling her to whom they belonged; and, in some measure, succeeded in calming her agitation.

"And now," he continued, "we will follow Mr. Falkland and Miss Maitland, though they far outstrip us in speed. But, never mind! we shall have a better opportunity of enjoying the lovely views that present themselves at every turn!"

Grace was too agitated to notice that, as he spoke, he struck into a different path. They proceeded some distance in silence.

At last, Grace observed that they did not seem to overtake Lucy and Falkland; neither were they joined by Mrs. Stanhope and Rosano.

"We can rejoin them in a few moments," said de Courcy, "but I trust Miss Shafton will forgive me if I have endeavoured to *make* that opportunity, which might be long in presenting itself."

Again Grace felt her limbs trembling; she made no reply, for she dared not, at that moment, trust her voice.

"We will," continued de Courcy, "if you allow me the happiness of a few minutes conversation, seat ourselves here. Nature seems to have intended it as a place of repose."

Grace willingly assented; it was a welcome relief to her.

Again there was a short silence; for de Courcy felt the importance of the moment, a moment that was to decide upon his future happiness, or disappointment; and he paused for words. At last, in a low voice broken by emotion, he said:—

"Grace—for I must call you by that dear name, even if it be the last time I ever have the happiness to address you—do you remember that it was this very time two years—oh! what weary years they have been to me—that I told you, and told you truly, how entirely my happiness depended on you? You then consented to bless me!—dare I again repeat that assertion—dare I hope the reassurance of that decision?"

Grace felt herself almost outraged by, what appeared to her, his fickleness and irresolution; the feeling gave her sudden firmness and spirit.

"No, my lord," she replied, as she arose with impetuosity, her eye flashing and her cheek assuming an unnatural brilliancy. "No, you dare not ask it! By your own act, that hope must for ever be destroyed!"

"Do not say so, Grace—do not, I entreat, I implore! Hear first, before you decide upon my misery, hear my exculpation of conduct, that must have appeared in your eyes fickle and extravagant! I swear that never for a

moment has my heart disowned your influence! "No, Grace, from the fatal moment that we parted, I have been a prey to the bitterest anguish and disappointment! Listen!"—and with gentle violence, he compelled her to be seated.

"Did your best friend and parent divulge to you the reason, the motive that obliged me to the desperate act that severed us?"

"He never told me the nature of the *report*," and Grace's lip curled, "that changed your feelings towards me!"

"Not my *feelings*, Grace," cried de Courcy passionately, "not my feelings! It is unkindly spoken! Since, however, your father, whose memory is dear to me, thought proper to be silent on that subject, I dare not swerve from his example; but, you will believe me, when I tell you, that had that report been true, I should have been the most guilty of men had I acted otherwise."

"I remember," replied Grace, "that my

beloved father did hint as much. But, if what you say be true, and I will not doubt your word, why rely upon a *report?* why not have applied to him to confirm its truth, or falsehood? you knew that he was the soul of truth."

"Ay, Grace, there, indeed, I erred! Had I done so, all would have been well! But you know not how I was worked upon; you cannot imagine the frightful plot that was laid to deceive me;—the false witnesses hired to swear away my happiness. Grace I was almost mad, and scarcely knew what I did!"

"Strange! What interest could they have had?"

"Alas! I grieve to say, one near and dear to me, one whose happiness I prized more than my own, was prime agent in the plot that was to destroy my peace for ever!—But she bitterly repents her error—would give worlds to recall it. She must soon be judged at a higher tribunal, and I trust will find mercy and forgiveness!"

A long silence ensued; Grace felt to whom he alluded, and sighed to think of her approaching doom.

"The other principal agent," continued de Courcy, "was the wretch Talbot. He had seen and admired you; heard of your wealth, and was about to be introduced to you."

"I remember well! Yes, Strickland mentioned him to my father."

"He did! Well, this man, disappointed in his hopes, by the report of our attachment, left no means untried, and entered into the views of —her I spoke of."

"But you discovered the falsehood of this report; and still—"

"I did, Grace! Your father's letter immediately opened my eyes, and brought me back to England; where chance, or rather Larry's perseverance, discovered the whole plot. I was about to throw myself at your feet, and ask forgiveness, when—do you remember the masquerade."

"Yes, I knew you at once!"

"There, Grace, I saw one ever at your side, paying you the attentions of a lover, those attentions received, apparently, with pleasure—report gave you to him—still, I hoped: I wrote to you, to your father, explaining all—"

"I never heard! I never received a letter!"

"No! for, on the death of my servant, a few months ago, I learned that they had been intercepted. I would then have explained all—I watched for an opportunity; for, though I was too well convinced of your engagement to Falkland, I was yet anxious to exculpate myself in your eyes. But Falkland was ever at your side; and, maddened by jealousy, sick at heart, I gave up the design."

"And you thought," asked Grace reproachfully, "that I could love another?"

De Courcy took her hand—it trembled in his; he pressed it to his lips.

"What could I think, dearest Grace! But of late, I own that I have been strangely blind:

it was only yesterday I learned from Miss Maitland, whom I shall ever love for it, the extent of my delusion. And now, my beloved, will you still condemn me? Have I not suffered enough?"

Grace turned; she gave him only one glance, but that glance was sufficient to transport her lover. He caught her in his arms, and pressing her to his heart, exclaimed:—

"Once more, mine! mine, now and for ever!"

Grace gently withdrew from his embrace; her eyes were filled with tears, but they were such tears as she had not of late shed—they were tears of joy.

"Let this," said de Courcy, drawing a ring from his bosom, and placing it on Grace's finger, "let this be the bond of our reunion, as it has been my last and only consolation!"

Grace blushed deeply, as she recognised her own lost ring.

"Dearest," said de Courcy, "did you think

you could have been so near me, and I not feel your presence? That were scarcely to be supposed!"

"What will they think of us?" cried Grace, starting up. "We must haste to seek them."

"I have so many things to tell you, dear Grace; so much still to explain!"

"You must leave them for some other time then! Hark, I hear footsteps."

They were footsteps, hasty one's too, and, presently, Larry, 'intirely out o' breath,' hove in sight.

"I beg pardin, your honour, for intheruptin' of you," said he with a penetrating look, in which he discovered, as he afterwards told Jessy, that neither his honour nor Miss Grace, looked mighty tired of each other; for that the pair of 'em were blushing for all the world as if they had a rason for it. "I beg pardon, your honour, but the ould lady, that is, God forgive me, her ladyship Mrs. Standup, sent me a hour ago to seek for you; although Miss Lucy

who has the pinitration of an angel, wished to go on. But Mrs. Standup declared that your lordship must have lost your way, and was imprissive on me to diskiver your lordship, and bring you to light. So I set off, your honour, with the speed of a flyin' parishute, somehow the wrong way though, and, afther a world an' all of exartion in that direction, I committed the same idintical mishtake in another—all for a rason I had! An' whin I found that the company was a looking alarmed, an' jumpin up to seek you, I jist made bowld my lord, to prisint myself to your honour's inspiction, bekase I thought you'd rather me do it than any one else. And that accounts for my uncalled for apparition, my lord."

"I do not think, Larry, you found much difficulty in finding us, when you thought it necessary to do so."

"Ah, my Lord," replied Larry bashfully, "you mustn't cast reflictions o' that nathur on my character! I'm not obleeged, your honour

knows, to see more than is convanient for keepin' out o' mischief! But, I'm sure, if i'd thought that your lordship, or Miss Grace—God bless her, an' continue me in the quality of dutifully sarvin' on her!—if I'd thought that your honour, or Miss Grace, wished to have had the prisint notice before this—if, I say, I could rally have imagined sich a thought, which didn't come asy to me, I'd sartainly have made every exertion in my power, to have come straight hither and given you the hint. But I hope, my Lord, you'll forgive me for having a mintal parsonal detarmination on so dilicate a subject."

"Oh, certainly, Larry, I forgive you, with all my heart. For, to tell you the truth, you have done precisely as I would have desired; and had you come when first you were sent in quest of me, it is very possible that I should have wished you in a very questionable quarter of celestial creation."

"Think o' that now! Well, my lord, I may

appale to your lordship, seein' as how you came from the 'holy ground,'* simultaneously with myself—God keep me in sich good company! I appale to your lordship, whether the Irish desarve all the commendations, that their neighbours pass upon 'em, for want o' foresight, an' blundherin', an puttin' their fut in every thing? Isn't it total the clare revarse, your honour?"

"To be sure it is!" replied the Earl good humouredly.

"An' lave an Irishman alone for conductin' himself in a way agreeable an' sthrictly within keepin', whin there's any thin' intheristin' a goin' forward! I'd lay a goold guinea to a one pound note, an' that's shillin' odds—that a sassenach, or a raw Scotchman, (who is called *raw*, bekase he's so difficult to be *done*,) or a caperin' Frenchmen, would have spiled the intertainment long ago."

"And now, Larry, go forward, and show us where the rest of the party are."

* There is part of the County of Cork so designated.

Larry proceeded nimbly and joyfully; as though he trod on air, treating his followers occasionally with a few flowers of rhetoric, of a quality 'peculiarly genuine, and genuinely peculiar,' as the Transatlantians say.*

* The Americans, it must be owned, deserve the credit of having introduced an entirely new style of composition into the English tongue. Their poetry, prose, even their jeux d'esprit, are all of a novel order. Some one has said that this arises from the people being in the 'infancy of perception.' But surely, that ingenuity which, in the old age of a language, originates new ideas, similies, and charming modes of expression, demands a juster judgment than can be expected from the flippant head of a sentence-turning critic. (How sillily this title, critic, has been abused!) Many of our friend Jonathan's witicisms are, however, ridiculous enough to be charactised as the offspring of 'Infant Meditation.' Take for example the following:--

"A soft. We have just learned by extraordinary express, that a fellow, down east, did not discover that he could breathe through his nose, till he had a lock-jaw."

"A Hercules. There is a Barrister in New Orleans, so amazing strong, that he is in the constant habit of cracking nuts between the wrinkles of his forehead."

"The individual who originates the shocking casualty, and wonderful circumventions for this valuable print, has just been remunerated for the information that there is a young Boston collegian still extant, who happens to be so unusually tall as to have completely forgotton every incident that occured in his childhood."

"See how happy ould nathur is to day, Miss Grace, bustin' wild with risibility, God bless her! The heaven smiling seranely, without clouds or vapours; its difficulties clared up, if I may use a mighty-farical exprission! The land givin' birth to roses an' posies, like an Irish harper, singing a ballad of love to the producin' of beautiful blishes on the famale cheeks of his listeners—the lake bamin', like a great jewell in an imirald green cloak—the trees an' the bushes shakin' themselves to and fro, in order to show the contint they undergo; an' the birds whistlin' innicently, an' performin' a wonderful variety of melodious sammytones. The whole box and dice of 'em seem to be in an agreeable lague to give a palitable risimblance o' paradise. An' sure, the heart athin is brim-full o' the adjacent enjoyment, an flutthers in the bussum, like a bird who loves his cage betther than the big sky, an' who is glad, of coorse, to 'void the first o' Septimber—small blame to him! An' whereiver I look I see smilin' faces:—an' sure, they say the face goes proxy for the heart.

There's yourself, Miss Grace, bamin' like a new planet, that's lit up in Heaven to delight and bless the Astrologers, who are niver tired of gazin' on it; an' there's his lordship detarmined, as I may say, not to let your ladyship have all the smiles to yourself; or, rather, to make yours more intinse by bein' joyful himself; and there's myself addin' fuel to the sport; for sure I know that your happiness is augminted by the pleasure you give to others; God bless you!"

As Larry ran forward to ease Mrs. Stanhope's mind, by telling her that he had succeeded in finding Lord de Courcy, 'who, to be sure, had gone a little out of the road,' the Earl observed to Grace:—

"We have, at any rate, one sincere sympathizer in our happiness—poor Larry! I think he has been almost as much distressed by our separation, as if he had been the sufferer!"

"Yes, poor Larry! I can now understand the long piece of advice, with which he treated me when you left Milan; and which I was trying all in my power to disobey."

"Well, my lord," exclaimed Lucy, with an arch smile, as our hero and heroine approached, "you appear to be an excellent guide!"

"I fear, in this instance, I must plead guilty to having taken a wrong direction; and Miss Shafton was fatigued, and obliged to rest."

"Dear Grace, yes, you look quite pale and fatigued!" exclaimed Lucy, with a provoking tone of mock compassion.

Grace felt that she was *not* looking pale; but contented herself with replying that she was now quite recovered.

"*Sei desto alfin, amico mio?* Are you at last awake my friend?" whispered Rosano, as he passed.

"We have it from all quarters," said the Earl to Grace; "but, never mind, they shall not spoil our happiness!"

The party now proceeded to the Town, and commenced an inspection of the 'lions.' After which, they viewed the Odescalchi palace; and, of course, did not fail to visit the famous elm

tree celebrated by Pliny the younger. By the time they returned to the place of rendezvous, Larry had every thing in excellent order for the repast; which those, who were not too happy to be able to partake of any but ethereal food, were ready to do ample justice to.

It was, indeed, a happy party, that reclined under the shade of the overhanging boughs. Discarding form and ceremony, those clogs upon true mirth and enjoyment, they gave loose to natural gladness of heart—each contributing something to the amusement of the whole. Grace, it is true, said but little; her heart was too full for speech; but happiness smiled on her lip and sparkled in her eye. Lucy contemplated her with feelings of inward joy and satisfaction; and Falkland, whom she had enlightened by a gentle hint, wondered that he had never suspected the truth before. He truly rejoiced in her happiness, and could not help owning that de Courcy was worthy to possess the heart that he had tried so perseveringly to despoil him of. Mrs. Stanhope,

alone, seemed to be perfectly unconscious that any secret or mystery had been going forward; not that she wanted penetration, but so perfectly convinced was she that there was an unaccountable, yet mutual dislike between de Courcy and Grace, that she would have required a double pair of spectacles to have perceived the truth. She had not perceived the Earl's manœuvre to get Grace as his companion, and therefore, imagined that he had been obliged, as a matter of mere politeness, to offer his arm.

The sun had disappeared behind the tops of the mountains, ere our party thought of returning; and then Rosano had to remind Mrs. Stanhope that the evening would be upon them before they could reach the opposite shore; and that lady had to exert her authority to persuade the rest of the party that it was time to re-embark. At last they were all assembled, and again seated in the gondola.

With what different feelings did Grace return! Her heart was no longer oppressed

by sadness: it was filled with joy and thankfulness. He, whom she had so long, so fondly loved, now sat by her side; her own, her affianced husband.

When de Courcy and Rosano had taken leave, Lucy followed Grace into her own room.

"Well, Grace, was I so wanting in discernment, when I told you that de Courcy was jealous of Falkland?"

Grace threw herself into her friend's arms, and, as Lucy kissed off the tears of happiness, she said—

"I knew it from the first, dear Grace! I suspected where your heart lay, even before I saw de Courcy; and *when* I saw him, I was convinced! Did I not tell you that you also would be happy? And now, I will go and tease Mrs. Stanhope about it, who has not the slightest suspicion."

"Not to-night, dear Lucy, not to-night"

"Well, to-morrow then!" and the laughing girl left Grace to her now happy contemplations.

CHAPTER XI.

When de Courcy returned to the Palazzo de Rinucci, he found that an alarming change had taken place in his sister's state. She would, doubtless, have lingered a few months longer, had it not been for an event which we shall record in the present chapter.

On the very morning which had brought happiness to de Courcy, by reuniting him to the object of his affections, the Duchess was doomed to a last earthly trial of feeling. She was lying, attended only by Manette, when a slip of paper was handed to her by Paolo, who informed her that the bearer waited an answer. She had no sooner cast her eyes over the con-

tents, than her cheek, which previously was pale as the waning moon, became lighted up by the hectic flush of old emotions. She pressed her hands upon her eye balls, as if to shut out some painful image; then, with desperate determination, again perused the note, which consisted of only two lines.

"See me but once, I implore you; I cannot live, unless I receive your pardon!

"Charles."

Commanding her feelings by a powerful effort, she enquired—

"Is Lord Charles waiting?"

"He is, illustrissima."

"In five minutes you may usher him in."

"Will it not be too much for your Grace?" asked Manette, anxiously.

"Nay, I think I am equal to it!" She motioned to Manette to bring her a portion of some cordial which stood near, and having swallowed it, bade her withdraw.

In a few moments Lord Charles entered the

room; he slowly approached the couch; his face, pale, and bearing traces of recent agitation, was anxiously turned towards the Duchess, as though he were desirous of finding his fears unfounded. When he beheld the object of his first love, looking already like an inhabitant of the tomb—he was unable to control his emotion; and, sinking on his knees beside her, he buried his face in his hands, and burst into tears. There ensued a long silence, only interrupted by his deep and fitful gasps. At last, in a voice hoarse from emotion, he asked—

"Augusta, can you, will you forgive me?"

It was evident that the Duchess was greatly affected. Her hands were clasped, her lips compressed, and her eyelids forcibly closed. She struggled fervently to regain composure; her lips moved in prayer, her soul was prostrate before heaven; her bosom throbbed with the keen wounds of memory. At last, in a soft yet hesitating voice, she replied

"Rise, Charles, rise! Ask not forgiveness

of me—oh, would that against me, only, you had offended!"

"Say that you forgive me,—say that you forgive my cruelty, my neglect. I knew not, I knew not how ill you really were; but, when I did learn it, I could not rest until I had seen you. Oh, say then that you forgive me!"

"I have nothing to forgive; but, I am glad that you have come. Had I been allowed to leave this world, without beholding the companion of my crime, my punishment would not have been sufficient." And, with a low moan, she sank back upon the pillow.

"Oh, Augusta, do not say so—do not say that it is a punishment to behold me!"

"Great, great is the punishment, Charles!"

"Heaven is my witness, that could I, by the sacrifice of my life, restore you to health—"

"Could you by the sacrifice of your life restore me to innocence—could you wash away the stains of mine and your own guilt; then, indeed, that sacrifice would be worth making—

for, Charles, when you arrive at the brink of eternity, like me, that guilt will appear to you, in all its glaring deformity; and you will shudder to meet your Maker."

"Dearest Augusta—you must not give way to these gloomy thoughts—there is hope."

"Hush, you talk like one of *this* world! I am, already, partly an inhabitant of another—listen to me, then. I cannot say that I forgive, for, I have nothing to forgive! My eyes are opened to the extent of my guilt; I have looked deeply into my heart, and I know, alas, that I alone was to blame!"

"Not so, not so Augusta!"

"Interrupt me not; it is useless, it is unkind to flatter one in my state. Nay, it is sinful to deceive one who must soon answer to her God. I repeat, that I alone was to blame for my own fall—but—you, Charles, you, alas, have sinned—greatly sinned; and, ere I leave this world, I would endeavour to impress on your mind the enormity of that sin, and the necessity for repentance."

"I know all, Augusta! I do, I have long repented."

A bitter smile passed over the face of the Duchess; but, as if ashamed of having given way to the almost involuntary feeling—she replied calmly:—

"Ay, after the fashion of the world! But, Charles, this world and its fashions are of short duration!"—Then, raising her eyes, and clasping her hands, she exclaimed energetically—"Oh, ye parents, who bring up your children in vanity, pride, and idleness, remember that, by so doing, you may doom them to a fate like mine—cut off in the flower of my youth, a prey to the worst ravages of remorse."

Lord Charles was powerfully affected. But, unlike de Courcy, a Christian only in name, he was unable to offer the healing power that the fervour of belief inspires. He saw that it was vain to repeat the hollow words of flattery and false hopes; and yet he knew not what to substitute. He was therefore silent; his eyes

fixed pleadingly and anxiously upon the invalid. The Duchess continued—

"Yet, Charles, sinner that I am, I am not without hope! I trust that my deep repentance will be accepted; I look for pardon through Him who came to save, and without whom an offender like me would be deprived of hope. My beloved, my noble brother, what do I not owe him? Had it not been for him—him whom I so deeply injured—I should have died impenitent, despairing!"

Lord Charles started. "Is he acquainted with—does he know?"

The Duchess hid her face in her hands, and, for the first time during the interview, gave way to a passion of tears. At last, endeavouring to compose herself, she raised her head, and replied.

"Often has the confession risen to my lips." Elevating her eyes to Heaven, she exclaimed, "is it an error, oh! my God, to have spared his noble heart so great, so incurable a pang?"

Then, again turning to Lord Charles, she continued—"I think I do not deceive myself when I say, that I have not refrained from this confession in mercy to myself; or through pride. Dearly as I prize his love—still more dearly do I prize his esteem—this confession would have eased my heart of a heavy burthen: but how could I wound him by such a disclosure? how could I tell de Courcy that his sister had dishonoured his name—that she was a blot upon the fame of his house? no, I could not, I could not inflict such distress!"

"You were right, Augusta! that secret must be hidden in the grave! None know—none have the slightest, the most distant suspicion—"

"There is nothing hidden that shall not be brought to light!" exclaimed the Duchess in a hollow and startling tone; "and then, it will not be to worms like us that that secret shall be made manifest."

Overcome by the fearful agitation of her

mind, she fell back apparently senseless. Lord Charles was about to call for assistance—but, with a motion of the hand, she restrained him—muttering, "Not yet, not yet!" Sprinkling her face with some water that stood on the table, after a long interval, he succeeded in restoring her. When he perceived that she was about again to address him, he prevented her by saying:—

"Dearest Augusta, do not, I entreat you, agitate yourself by further conversation, you are not equal to it; and I was wrong in asking for this interview; but I was not aware of your weak state, and I could not bear the reproaches of my own heart. But, now I see it is too much for you!"

"Nay, of what consequence is it? A few days, sooner or later—I feel my term is drawing very near its close! Charles we are now taking our eternal farewell."

"Dear Augusta!"

"Call me not *dear!*" And yet, it is right that I should be reminded how little I deserve pardon."

"Talk not thus, Augusta!" exclaimed Lord Charles passionately—"Oh! what, what can I say to calm you?"

"I am calm, perfectly calm! Hear me—we are now bidding each other farewell for ever!"

Lord Charles started from the chair on which he was seated, and traversing the room with hasty and unequal strides, exclaimed—

"I cannot bear this! Accursed that I am; wretch, monster, to have caused you this ruin, this misery!"

"Be composed; you have no need to upbraid yourself!"

"Away! tell me not that I have nothing to accuse myself of! Cease to reproach yourself for a sin, the whole burden of which ought to fall on me alone! Did I not love you to adoration—you, the wife of another? On me, then, fall the punishment—on me, the guilty wretch who dared to tell you of his love—who madly sued for a return!"

"You forget, Charles, that you offered me that love when I might have accepted it with

innocence; when we might have led a life of bliss together. I should then have been a virtuous wife, perhaps, a happy mother! "—and the tears chased each other down her cheeks. "But, pride, vanity, and ambition reigned in my heart, choking up every softer emotion; and the sweet prospect was destroyed. I gave my hand to one whom I despised: I wedded wealth and title, and reaped my reward, by feeling all the sad void that such a union naturally creates. Sated by the continual homage that was paid to me, the pleasure of satisfied ambition, and gratified vanity soon palled. I wearied of every thing—it was in vain I sought for variety; the void still remained! I had nothing to love, nothing that loved me; I sought relief in the crowd, but the crowd failed to interest me. I returned to England; I saw you again—the memory of our love came strongly upon me. I cherished that remembrance, I allowed it to occupy my whole thoughts. Your presence brought the excitement for which I had so long panted, and—"

"And I took advantage of your kindness. I abused the confidence you placed in me! Do not, do not seek to excuse me; I feel how deeply culpable I have been! I lingered near you, when I should have flown; I nourished hope when hope was guilt; I thought but of the gratification of my own impetuous passion. Accursed, accursed that I am!" and with his clenched hand he smote his brow. "Was I not accursed even in my birth? Why did fortune deprive me of the power of offering you that state, for which you were born? Why was fate so cruel as to throw me near you, and yet deny me the means of making you happy?"

"Alas! 'tis weakness, Charles, to accuse fate; when we have to blame but our own folly. Fortune gave you ample means for more than the purposes of comfort and happiness; with the addition of my wealth we might have possessed all, and more than all, that is necessary for a life of luxury. But, as I said, I was blind! I knew not in what true happiness con-

sisted. Be composed I entreat you, I have much to say."

"Composed! oh, Augusta, to see you thus,—to know myself the cause—to know that I was not only the destroyer of your peace, but that, having gained your love, I basely abandoned you! Yes, caught by the beauty of one, who thinks not of me, I forgot all—deserted, neglected you! Can you, can you forgive me?"

The Duchess writhed as though a serpent had stung her; there was a convulsive movement throughout her whole frame; her lips became livid—the cold dew stood upon her brow.

"Oh God, oh God!" exclaimed Lord Charles, "I have killed her!"

With a violent effort she struggled against her emotion. She signed to him to remain quiet; but it was long ere she was sufficiently recovered to speak. At length, she extended her hand to him, saying in a faint voice—

"Yes, Charles, thank God, I can,—yes, I can, I do forgive you!"

Lord Charles took the hand—he bathed it in his tears. This was revenge; but revenge was no longer desired. Before the arrival of de Courcy, the Duchess would have studied how she might inflict the greatest pain on her repentant lover; she would have delighted to overwhelm him with bitter reproaches. But those feelings had given place to a more Christian temper, and the repentant tears shed by him who had wronged and deserted her, called forth only the prayer that they might lead to that real contrition of heart, which alone is available with God.

"God bless you, God bless you, Augusta, for these words! They will be some consolation to me; though I can never forgive myself—though this bosom can never again know peace!"

"Seek it, Charles, where alone it can be found;—seek it in the consolations of religion! You are young; time will bring a remedy for your present regret. You have, perhaps, a

long life before you. Let me hope that that life will be spent in the practice of piety and virtue. Remember, I speak as one already in the grave! You will, I trust, marry—I should be sorry to think that you would not! Seek some one worthy of your love, and you will become useful and happy. You will—"

Lord Charles made a gesture of impatience.

"Nay, you must promise me that you will endeavour to do as I wish."

"Cease, cease, I cannot bear this! You were never half so dear to me as you are at this moment:—I never knew your worth till now. Talk not to me of another:—my life will henceforth be spent in solitude, in regret."

"I trust not! you must not—you will not refuse my last request?"

"What would you have, Augusta?"

"I would have you—I do not say forget me—yet, I would have you forget what I have been. I desire you to think of me as of a beloved friend. I ask you to reflect seriously on

your past life, and to shun the vanities and follies of the world. I would have you form a union which should render you happy; and it will soothe my dying moments to feel that your prospects and hopes have not been blighted by me."

The Duchess' voice grew faint—Lord Charles looked at her with alarm.

"Yes," she exclaimed, in reply to his anxious glance, "I feel my strength failing! We must say—farewell. You will promise me?"

"Augusta," replied Lord Charles solemnly, "I cannot promise that which, at the present moment, appears to me to be impossible! Do not ask it."

"With time, with time," said the Duchess, "you will forget—or, at any rate, the memory of my sad fate will be softened."

"In that case, I will think of your request."

"And, Charles, you will not forget," and her voice grew fainter, and more faint, "you will not forget my advice? you will make peace

there ?" and she raised her hand towards heaven.

"I never will, I never can forget it, Augusta; and I doubt not but it will work the salutary change you so much desire. Upon that subject rest satisfied; I feel that you have already wrought a change within me."

"Thank God, thank God!" and her lips moved as though in secret thanksgiving.

Lord Charles, as he noticed her decreasing strength, felt that it was time he were gone; but, when the thought rushed upon him, that he should never behold her again—she appeared a treasure of inestimable value in his eyes—his former love returned with all its tenderness, and he had not courage to withdraw. For a time, they gazed on each other in silence; at last, the Duchess, extending her hand, whispered:—

"And now, farewell!"

Lord Charles replied not: he stood immoveable. It seemed as though his lips refused to

give utterance to the word. His face was ghastly pale– his eyes were dimmed by tears.

"Farewell, Charles, I can no more!" and she fell back perfectly exhausted. He bent over her—imprinted one kiss on her pallid lips —then, ringing for the attendants, rushed from the apartment.

CHAPTER XII.

"My dear Madam," said Lucy to Mrs. Stanhope, the morning after the excursion, "what an excellent thing it is to have penetration! Now, I know that you possess no small share; yet, I have left you far behind! I have made a discovery that has baffled your penetration."

"Indeed! I wonder what this wonderful discovery is."

"I will tell you. You were, you remember, very anxious to find out the reason of Lord de Courcy's coolness to Falkland?"

"I see no coolness between them at all! I never saw two people more friendly than they were yesterday."

"Ay, yesterday I grant you."

"And what was the cause then?" asked Mrs. Stanhope, with no small curiosity, "for once there certainly was a certain chill in de Courcy's manner to him, which now appears to have vanished!"

"Would you have thought it, my dear Mrs. Stanhope? *jealousy!*"

"Pshaw, my dear girl, your vanity misleads you a little!"

"Ay, that is just what Grace *thought*, though she was not quite so insulting as to *say* so. But here she comes, and you can ask her if I do not speak the truth; for, if I am not very much mistaken, Lord de Courcy confessed it to her; and you will find that there is no vanity in the case, but that, as I tell you, de Courcy was jealous of Falkland. Was it not so, Grace?"

Grace smiled and blushed.

"Is this true, Grace? Lucy would persuade me that Lord de Courcy is in love with her."

"I said no such thing, my dear Mrs. Stanhope! I never hinted such a calamity!"

"What does she mean, Grace? She becomes worse and worse, and is now such a madcap that there is no believing her."

"In this case, however, there is some truth in what she says!" observed Grace, humouring Lucy by keeping up the joke; while the latter, giving her a nod of approbation, left the room.

"Is there really?" questioned Mrs. Stanhope. "Well, there is no judging of any one's taste! Now, I should never have imagined that such a man as de Courcy would fall in love with Lucy Maitland. If he had become attached to you, Grace—but you are so very cold to him, and I suppose that is the reason why he prefers Lucy."

"But he does not prefer Lucy."

"What do you mean then, my dear Grace—you speak in riddles?"

"Well, I will do so no longer!" and with a blushing cheek, Grace told Mrs. Stanhope the long story of her love, which there is no

need, (nor any intention on our part) to recapitulate for our readers.

Nothing could equal that lady's astonishment, except it were the excess of her delight. It was some time before she could understand or believe it; but when at last conviction flashed upon her, her congratulations to Grace, and her felicitations on her own foresight, were extreme and sincere. Forgetting that she had had no hand in promoting the happy event, she exclaimed :—

"Well now, Grace, it is extraordinary, but de Courcy was the very man I chose for you from the first! Only, he was, unfortunately abroad. And I told your dear father, that I would have nothing less than a coronet for you."

"My dear, dear father, he thought not of the coronet! But, would that he had lived to see this day, and to participate in his child's happiness! Oh! if the dead can look upon this earth, he will bless my union with de Courcy."

It was late in the day before the Earl came, but Larry, happy in resuming his old office, had been the bearer of a note to Grace, in which de Courcy informed her that the Duchess was considerably worse. "I have (he wrote) told her of that which I knew would shed peace over her dying moments, our happy reunion. She is desirous of seeing you; of receiving forgiveness from your own lips; and I thought I knew my Grace too well, not to promise my poor sister this gratification."

The moment her lover arrived, Grace hastened to assure him of her willingness to comply with the wish of the Duchess.

"I never for one moment doubted it," replied the Earl. "Even had our future lot been blighted through her error, you would not have refused your forgiveness; for she is suffering and repentant."

"If," observed Grace, "you thought that my presence would soothe her last moments; that it would really be agreeable to her—it

would be a satisfaction to me to remain with her, and to devote myself to the task of endeavouring to console her."

The Earl pressed her to his heart, "God bless you, my own love!" he exclaimed, "I could not have asked such a sacrifice of you. But—she has no female friend near her, and—"

Say no more, dear Ernest; I will prepare to spend as long a time with her as she may desire."

"Alas, it cannot be very long! She has, as I suspected, been gradually sinking for some time; and now, the decay becomes so rapid, that she is herself aware how short a period remains to her."

It was settled that the Earl should come the next morning, to conduct Grace to the Duchess.

Grace was prepared, and watching the approach of the Gondola, which the Duke had sent forth, in extra magnificence, upon the occasion, when Mrs. Stanhope observed:—

"It is too bad, Grace, to lose you just now,

when you are beginning to look happy and smiling; but I suppose it must be."

"It will not be for long, dear friend, and I am sure you would not have me neglect such a duty."

"No indeed, my love, I would not! and I trust your presence will be a consolation to her. It must indeed be so, to receive the forgiveness of one whom she attempted so deeply to injure."

Grace looked surprised, for, in relating her story to Mrs. Stanhope, she had, with instinctive delicacy, avoided mentioning the Duchess' participation in the deceit practised against her. Mrs. Stanhope, observing her surprise, continued—

"I have long been aware, my dear Grace, that the Duchess tried to injure you by spreading a false and alarming report concerning you; the motive of which I was much puzzled to divine. Had I, when I first knew you, been aware that de Courcy had visited in your family,

I should have been more clear sighted. The mystery, however, was revealed by your yesterday's communication; and, as I was saying, I trust that your forgiveness will bring peace to her. She has no female friend near her, and you, the affianced wife of her brother, are decidedly the most proper person to attend her last moments. Had she been less haughty and unconciliating, she would have made friends, who would not abandon her at a time like this."

"De Courcy says that she is much changed in that respect; and is sincerely penitent."

"I am glad to hear it. Go then, my dear girl; you will, I am sure, be a source of great comfort to her!"

In a few moments, Grace was sitting by de Courcy's side. As the bark cut its way through the smooth waters, Larry, the picture of content and happiness, had provided for Jessy's comfort in the other part of the boat, and it was with evident difficulty that he restrained the overflowing of his heart. There was, how-

ever, no opportunity for conversation, and he was obliged to content himself with what he called "optical delusions."

Grace, notwithstanding her efforts to dispel the feeling, had a kind of dread of finding herself in the presence of the Duchess. She tried to think of her as the dying and suffering sinner, but could behold her only in the pride of beauty—the haughty eye fixed upon her; the curling lip expressive of abhorrence. Her heart sank at the thought of encountering this stern woman, and, when the Earl pointed out to her the magnificent residence of the Rinucci, she felt almost a regret at being so near it. She quickly endeavoured to banish the feeling; and one look at de Courcy, joined with the thought that it was *his* sister, who now required her care, enabled her to overcome, in some measure, the unpleasant sensations that had taken possession of her. As they approached, Larry, who had, without doubt, suffered considerable pain from his long silence, exclaimed.

"There's his imminence the Duke, a waitin' to resave her ladyship, Miss Grace. Now, that's what I call civility an' thrue politeness; jist what we shew to the stranger in ould Ireland. '*Caed mille falteagh*' as the hero of antykitty said to the murtherin' Dhunes (Danes). See how noble he stands, like the round Tower o' Dromore, that said to that imminent Consarvitive, Mr. Oliver Crumwill—bate your belly full alagh, an' welcome! Now, if any thing reconciles me to this alien soort o' life, it's the marked politeness of the crathurs o' furriners. There goes his hat off! ay, an' his hand to his bussum! That's the rale genuine rispict that has a connixion with the heart an' feelings. An', sartain sure, he's a parsonible man, this same Duck; an' as stiff an' lane as the backbone of a shark. An' this minds me how the Sassenachs fall short o' their neighbours the Frinch, an' us. They seem as if it was indispinsible to their dignity, to assert their freedom every where; for, in the sthreets of London, I've seen a

famale shoved off the flags as if she'd been a carcase o' salt mate; an', the moment afther, I've seen that same cause of her annoyance jump on one side to make way for the shiriff—as if a shiriff inspired rispect like a mimber o' the sect! An', onct or twicet, I've had occasion of puttin' such fellows in the mud, in behalf of an angel crathur, who couldn't bear the brutality of interruption. An' I needn't say what coorse the popilation of Ireland folly, when the lovely form of 'oman bu'sts upon 'em —The laste is an elicthric jump into the mud, an' a bindin' o' the body in the curve o' coortesy; and a 'fair be the road for one so fair!' or some similar apostacy. Ah, if thim that objects to the repale, on the score of the Hibernian boys fallin' into their original savageness, were to read a bit, see a bit, an' thin, in continyation, *think* a bit, they'd come to the conclusion that refinement isn't so young in the world, as their tachers tell 'em at the infirmary.* Look at

* Larry means, no doubt, 'university', here.

the time when that young 'oman, as Tommy Moore, the Biographer of Ireland says, who took a serky (circuit) of the whole island, carryin' a white wand, a goold ring, a gemmed petticoat, and her own visible and bloomin' persin, safe an' sound all the journey; and sittin' down, on her return, to sing:—

> Sir knight, I feel not the faste alarum
> No boy of Erin will do me harum;
> For though they love woman and goldien store,
> Sir knight, they love honor and varty more.

Thrue for her the darlint. It's the charter of our social and religious liberties, 'the love of 'oman, honor, and varty'? Whisht, agra, look how the Duck propels his hand to Miss Grace, to hide her out o' the galley! Well, he's a rale gintleman complete! What a fine fellow he'd be for mastherr o' the ceremonies at the royal christenin'! I'll spake to her Majesty the Queen—that is if she'll give me an audience—to offer him an engagement."

It was indeed the Duke, who stood ready

to receive, with due honor, the sister elect of his Duchess. He ushered her in, with the ceremonious formality which was a part of his existence.

After she had partaken of the refreshment, which was prepared in costly style against her reception, the Earl took her by the hand, and led her to the apartment of the Duchess.

How did all Grace's fears give way to tenderness and compassion, as she beheld the attenuated form that lay before her!

Wrapped in loose robes of costly material, and extended on a couch, the Duchess looked as though a breath would destroy the fragile thread that bound her to existence. Her large eyes—now strongly resembling those of her brother, from which they had differed only in expression—seemed of an unearthly size and brilliancy, the effect of the latter encreased by the hectic flush of her cheek. She looked still lovely; but it was not the loveliness of this world. It made the beholder shudder, and

think of the tomb. She held out her hand to Grace, and as the latter took, and gently pressed it, she said in a low voice:—

"You have come to soothe the last moments of one, who tried all in her power to injure you."

"Hush," replied Grace softly, taking the seat to which she motioned her at the side of the couch, "we will not hear, we will not think of the past! Whatever you may accuse yourself of towards me, believe me I freely forgive! And I pray that you may be spared to witness our happiness."

The Duchess shook her head—"It cannot be," she said. "But, thanks to him," pointing to the Earl, "I die a christian; and I die with hope!"

Grace seldom left the room of the invalid, except when de Courcy insisted upon her accompanying him for a walk in the grounds, or a sail upon the lake. The Duchess never allowed this duty to be neglected. She had

not, she said, deserved the attention of so kind a friend, and sister; and she was peremptory in her command that Grace should seek relief from air, exercise, and, what was perhaps more efficacious, the society of de Courcy.

One day, as they were seated in one of the viottolas, shaded by the overhanging vine, Grace expressed her uneasiness and surprise at Teresa's silence. Whilst discoursing on the subject, a servant approached with a packet.

"Here is the desired news!" exclaimed de Courcy. "And yes, it is her hand writing."

"Gracious heaven," cried Grace, observing the black seal, "it is all over—poor little Ugo is no more!"

"No, thank heaven, it is not so!" said de Courcy, hastily casting his eye over the letters, and placing one directed to Grace, in her hand. She read as follows:—

"My dearest friend,

"You will have felt surprise at my long silence; but the strange and terrible

event that has occurred here, since I wrote last, will plead sufficient excuse for me. You shall hear!

"My beloved boy, I told you in my last, was convalescent; he is now, thank God, quite recovered! The bloom and roundness of his cheek are beginning to be restored: and he looks all smiles and happiness. I hasten to assure you of this, fearing that the black seal may have alarmed you for my darling; and, consequently, for the peace of her on whom you have bestowed the title of sister.

"As my boy improved in health, the anxiety hitherto displayed by Tebaldi, settled into a fixed and sullen gloom. He saw no one, not even the Countess. Several times she ventured to approach, but was dismissed with savage brutality. Michele, alone, his favoured domestic, was allowed to attend upon him. My mother anxiously enquired of this man, if the Count were ill.

"'I don't know, eccellenza;' he replied, 'for

he does not complain; but he looks bad enough, and is always putting his hands to his ears, as if to shut out some sound that molests him.'

"It appears, that, after this, he asked Michele repeatedly—'Why does that boy continue to shriek? I am no longer present to scare him.'

"On being assured that Ugo was fast recovering and perfectly quiet and tractable, he seemed to be assailed by a new alarm, but made no remark.

"Michele, struck with the alteration that every day became more visible in his master, at last ventured to entreat him to have some advice. But he rejected his request: telling him, he was well, well in body and needed no physician. Michele then suggested the priest; but, Tebaldi, bending on him a look of rage and contempt, asked him if the priest could bring back his murdered Ugo—'murdered' he muttered, by my obstinacy and pride! Can the priest,' he continued, with increasing violence

amounting almost to frenzy, 'link to me the hearts that I have alienated? Can he prevent my wife and daughter, and the boy, for whom I would have sacrificed all—can he prevent their rejoicing over my grave? can he prevent all who ever heard of the name of Tebaldi, from pointing to his tomb, and saying 'there lies the tyrant, the slayer of his son, the sacrificer of his daughter!'

"'Ere he came to the conclusion of this speech, his countenance became livid, his lips deep purple, and the froth issued from his mouth.'

"Michele, dreadfully alarmed, called loudly for assistance. The domestics, hearing his cries, ran to the spot. My mother was instantly advised of what had happened, but before she reached the apartment, it had become dangerous for her to enter. It required the strength of several men to hold him down. He had become a raving maniac!

"Medical assistance was instantly pro-

cured; but, after a few days, he was pronounced to be incurable. He lingered for some time, during which the utmost severity was necessary, to prevent his committing violence either on himself, or on those who surrounded him.

"We were unable to give him any relief, and it was harrowing to hear his wild screams.

"'Hush, hush, Ugo!'" he would cry, "'do not shriek, do not shriek! See, I will play with you, and laugh abundantly!'" And he mimicked the voice of mirth with hideous screams of laughter. "'Sit here, sit here, pretty one! There, you shall have a great horse, and ride all alone! Hush, Ugo, young gentlemen should not be always thinking of their mamas. A great horse, my boy—a great black horse, and no mama. Urchin, I have said it—no mama! God, God, you will kill me with these screams. Peace, peace—what shall I give you? what shall I give you?—No, no, no mama! Any thing, but no mama! *Ingrato ragazzaccio! fanciullo d' inferno!* Shriek no more at me,—

I strike—see, I clench my hand, I strike! Cease, cease or I kill thee! Take him away, away with him, quick, quick. No, no! scream and die if you will, but no mama, no mama.'"

"Thus would he lash himself into fury; and thus he finally expired, without receiving those cares and attentions, which both my mother and myself would have willingly bestowed. Cursing himself, cursing all who surrounded him, he died, without one prayer or one sigh of repentance!

"Dreadful, horrible!" exclaimed Grace.

"Dreadful, indeed!" exclaimed de Courcy, "hateful as his character was, I could have wished him a better end."

Teresa went on to say:—

"My poor mother is dreadfully shocked by this sudden and frightful event, and requires all my care. Tebaldi had long since willed the whole of his property to Ugo; but, not foreseeing his own untimely end, he has appointed no guardian, therefore, I have sole possession

of my dear boy. Of this happiness, no doubt, Tebaldi would have deprived me, could he have foreseen the course of events. I cannot say (you would believe me a hypocrite if I did) that I grieve for his loss; but I do deeply grieve that he died as he did—unrepentant, insensible to the care of his wife and child.

"Farewell, dear Grace! my fate is now fixed near my mother, whose only consolation I am. To endeavour to make her remaining days pass more happily, and to watch over the education of my beloved child, will be my only cares. And, when time shall have softened the horror of the late tragical events, I look forward to a life of tranquil and peaceful enjoyment: such, as a short time since, I could never have hoped for. When you leave your present abode, to prosecute your tour through Italy, you will, doubtless, pass near our castle. It is only a few miles from Bergamo, and I shall expect that you will make some short stay with us. The Countess, who has heard of

your kindness to her persecuted Teresa, is desirious of expressing her gratitude. Do not refuse us, then, this little favour. I shall not be happy if you leave Italy without seeing me.

"Addio!

"Your friend,

"Teresa."

We will hasten over the short period that remained to the Duchess. She breathed her last in the arms of Grace, who together with de Courcy, had watched by her couch for the last few days. Regretting her past life, and hoping for pardon, she died a sincere penitent; and both the Earl and Grace felt that, although her sins had been great, her repentance was deep, and, they trusted, effectual.

After this melancholy event, de Courcy pressed for a return to England. He would not hear of a winter in Rome, "that is," he said, "unless Grace will consent to become mine, before we return." But to this Grace would not consent.

"No, dear Ernest, it must be in our own dear country that that event shall take place. I shall not fancy our union blessed, unless it be solemnized amongst the scenes where he who is gone first hallowed our loves."

It was finally settled that the remainder of their tour should immediately be finished; and that, before the close of autumn, they should land in England.

Rosano, freed from all apprehension by the death of Tebaldi, returned to his own estates, nourishing the hope, as he confessed to de Courcy, that he should finally persuade Teresa to a union, in which they might forget their past and lengthened trials.

Teresa's request was not forgotten. Our party spent a few days at the formidable Castello dei Tebaldi, where Lucy declared that she fancied in every gloomy corridor she beheld the grim figure of its former proprietor. They were all much pleased with the sweet and amiable manners of the Countess, who, though

still suffering from the severe shock her nerves had received, from the awful spectacle of her husband's death, yet received them with great hospitality and kindness.

Teresa bade them adieu with tears of real regret; while the little Ugo assured Grace, that, when he was a man, he would bring his mama to England to see her and his friend De Courcy.

CHAPTER XIII.

It was a joyful day for the inhabitants of the village of —— when the respective proprietors of Meadlands, and de Courcy Hall, returned to their long deserted dwellings.

The news of the approaching nuptials soon spread over the whole neighbourhood, and various were the sensations to which it gave rise.

The joy and gladness in the hearts of the poor were sincere, and loudly expressed, and formed a strong contrast with the anger, rage, and malice which predominated in the bosoms

subject. He bade his wife and daughter to hold their tongues, and not give way to uncharitable remarks. "We shall have," thought he, "a grand wedding, where the rector will, of course, make a prominent figure, and come in for a good fee." Alas, what was the reverend gentleman's horror when a report began to be circulated that Strickland and his wife had arrived at Meadlands, to be present at the ceremony, which, it was positively rumoured, the former was to perform. Dr. Squeezetithe would not believe it. No, he would not believe that the honour of the Church was to be so insulted in his person. He would call upon the Earl, and learn, from his own lips, if the resident Rector were to be thus outraged.

With this determination, he actually gave up the very first run with the hounds of the season, and set out upon his walk to the Hall. In his progress, he fell in with Larry, whose polite bow was acknowledged with condescending dignity by the Doctor, who, knowing him

to be in high favour, and cognisant of everything that was going on, determined to have a little conversation with him.

"Good morning, my friend!"

"Good morning your rectorship! (Larry was careful in respect to titles) Its' plased I am to see your worship, after an absence so distressin an' dithrimintal to us both; an' lookin' no ways sthruck in years, or dilapitated in couture."

This kind of flattery was peculiarly palatable to the reverend gentleman. He smiled graciously as he replied, "do you think so? well, I am not sure but that you are right."

"I know I'm right, an' I know it's a great pleasure to know when one's right—for that's the cute rub of all."

"What do you mean by that, my friend?"

"Why, you know, your worship, that to be cynical (sceptical) is the talent of these antidiluvian times; and, therefore, when a mortial crathur wishes to be convinced, and goes about

a convincin' himself, and *does convince* himself, by intinse rasonin,' I think there's a plain case of self satisfaction made out!"

"Nay, my friend, I do not agree with you!" returned the Doctor quickly, I hold that the unaided intellect of a human being is incapable of such a result. It is effected only by the combination of the wise, the experienced, and the legitimately acknowledged. For, what says the Preacher? 'The words of the wise *are* as goads, and as nails fastened *by* the Masters of assemblies.'* And from this I gather that wisdom results from the coming together of the ordained—conviction being the result of combination. Therefore, your position is quashed, 'at an instant suddenly.' Ha, ha!"

"I crave pardon to ax your worship, who, of coorse, knows every thing, whether you ever heard tell of the case o' Tim Malony, the rinigate, an' the three squires o' Bandon.

* Ecclesiastes, chap. xii, ver. 11.

and argiments, betwuxt the three squires; an' they began rappin' an' snappin' at aitch other, instead of clearin' away the poor boy's doubts an' difficulties. They made a hugeous lot of quotitions an' exthracts, an' got from luke warm to singin' hot, an' from singin' hot to scaldin'; and, at long last, fell fightin', jist as if they intinded creatin' an occasion for a coroner's inquest.* 'Och, your honours, your honours,' says Tim, 'cease fightin', an' tell me what I'm to b'lieve!' 'You ain't to have any faith in that matther,' cries one, 'bekase—' 'B'lieve it or you'll be damned!' busts in another. 'Take a middlin coorse!' thunders the third. 'Oh! *mille murther an' 'ouns!*' says Tim. An', savin' your rivirind prisince, he went back to the ould creed agin."

"Alas!" responded Dr. Squeezetithe, "verifying the text, 'the dog *is* turned to his own

* An Irishwoman in Holborn, having rescued her adventurous child from beneath the wheels of an omnibus, was heard to demand—"Have you no fear of a coronor's inquest before your eyes, ye limb o' the world?"

the word, sure enough! I don' know why it didn't come familiar to me seein', that I'm Irish to the back bone, God keep me so! Well, as I was going to say, Squire Falkland will aqually lade to the hymanayal althar (I've hoult of it at last, I think!) Miss Lucy Maitland. And, by the simulation of conthraries, I, Launcelot Monaghan, am to bring up the rare, as in all dutiful allagiance, with Jessy Willington, a *removed* niece of the high functionary and great pathron o' porthray painters of that name. More power to us all, Amin! An' Mr. Strickland is goin to 'fishiate, and 'turn us off,' as a person may say. An' I've consinted to bate my doubts of the lagality of a marriage in a Protishtant convinticle, in consequence of the high respict I howld for that same Mr. Strickland, who, rally, is not far from bein' as good as a priest. I've made a resarve, however, that, as soon as we visit the mother counthry, we'll have the matther ratified in Douglas Chapel, by Father Heffornan. I'd have held out a bit

longer, only, havin' scribbled a bit of a note to his rivirince for lave an' licence, he led me to undherstand that, undher the circumstances of my situation, which were much of a piece with those of the great Babylonian giniral,* whose name don't come to hand aisily, I might hope for absolution afther a prominint pinance, providin', that I believed in my conscience I was not doin' as well as I might be, an' by takin' care to wish myself farvantly in a chapel all the time o' the sarvice. Which was aisy to me to promise, considtherin' the disposition of my private feelin's."

"I will not, at present, expatiate, my good

* Larry, no doubt, alluded to Naaman, captain of the host of the King of Syria, who, it is said, prayed to be permitted to worship the god Rimmon, on account of obedience to his Sovereign. This translation, however, is objected to by Hebraists, who prove that it is opposed, not only to the tenor of the original, but to the declaration in the preceding verse:—"thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the Lord."—2 Kings, chap. v., ver. 17. They show that he asks forgiveness for a past error, not permission for future idolatry.

friend, on your unhappy tenets; for I wish to be assured of the truthfulness of the report which you have just made me; and which, indeed, hath whilom come to my knowledge. I cannot believe that Lord de Courcy will commit such a moral outrage, as to engage this Mr. Strickland, who, a few months since, was a curate, on forty paltry pounds stipend—to the prejudice of myself, a real rector and vicar of souls. Verily this would be an indignity to the cloth."

"Thrue for you, Doctor dear; but, sure enough, the masther's bint on it. He *would* have it, so I didn't attimpt to intherfare in your favour."

"I must see his lordship! He cannot mean me such an affront! It is one too remarkable to escape the invidiousness of my flock.

"Och, surely, they must be above that crime; seein' that your worship praches an' expounds to 'em, oncet every Sunday, on the seven cardinal irrigularities, an' showin' 'em an active example in your own parsonal practice to go by! But the wandherin of the laity is beyant b'lief!"

"The just man falls seven times a day!" solemnly ejaculated the Doctor.

"Ah, thin," interrupted Larry, "what must be the capsizing of a led congregation! But your rectorship will p'raps, walk to the liberary, where his honour is a-sittin' a-writin', at this prisint spakin."

As Dr. Squeezetithe passed on, Larry, after watching his progress for some little time, enclaimed:—

"There you go, docther, darling! Powers above, only to think of his valyin' the goodness, zale, an ifficacy of a minister of God, by the posht he houlds amidst the clargy, an' the dirty bit o' salary he recaves! Oh, wisha, wisha, if I could but see such men as Mr. Strickland more privalint, I wouldn't mind attindin' the sarvice a bit; but, that squeezin', fox-huntin' game-atin', wine-washin'-in, biggutted, intolerable, backbiting, tithe-tearin', process, time and mammon-sarvin conglomeration is, r'ally an' thruly, as great a dirtimint to convarsion as a pew opener;—an' a pew opener, as the world

knows, is unmatched for insolence to the humble an' humility to the overbearin'. Ah! I don't think they do right to have pews an' paid seats in the churches at all, at all! Sure, the Lord is anxious to be adored; an' calls continually his crathurs to assimble before him; an' what can be more offinsive to him, than to see a ripintant sinner thrust about in the back sates among those noisy an' disthractin' charity childer, who tempt his mind to go wandherin' agin, from its first imprission? Or, may be, his heart is soured by his being spoken to of his shabbiness and poverty: as if fine clothes an' a full pocket were recommindations to the great Father of All. Sure, when waitin' for the masther in the enthry, I've seen how thim arrogant pew-openers, and badles, behave; an' I will say, for one, that I niver can lane to a church where such a forbiddin' set o' lights are tolerated. One would think they were put there to pull the sanctity out o' the sowl, an' to influence the angry an' rebillious passions o' the popilation. An' I do think that if my words were taken

down in writin', an' diffused abroad, like the Penny Magazine, they might come to the knowledge of the great Curate o' Cantherbury, an' the Bishop o' London, and might persuade thim to go about temptin' the people into the b'lief, by throwin' open the arey of St. Paul's, an' Westminster Abbey, an', by havin' chairs in the aisle, like they do on the Continint, at a halfpenny a-piece for all class o' sarchers afther thruth an' consolation. An' the objects in rags needn't be tould that they musn't rub up aginst the quality's satins an 'velvets, for nathral humility is strengthened by the mildness o' the great, an' by their mixin' freely with their infariors."

When Dr. Squeezetithe was ushered into the the Earl, he was recieved with politeness, though not much warmth, for the Earl did not admire his character.

After a few preparatory hems, the rector, with much pomp, opened his business; and received from the Earl a decided acknowledgement that Mr. Strickland had been invited to perform the ceremony. The latter gentleman was, as the

Earl remarked, an old an esteemed friend of Dr. Shafton; and Miss Shafton had expressed a wish that he should officiate on the occasion. The Earl went on to say, that no offence to Dr. Squeezetithe was intended by this choice. But Dr. Squeezetithe could not repress his rage; even the presence of an Earl failed to prevent its explosion.

"I thought," he cried, "that this—excuse me, but I must say—extraordinary conduct proceeded from Miss Shafton; who, doubtless, follows in the steps of her father, whose pleasure it was to endeavour to insult the dignities of the church."

"Excuse me," said de Courcy, rising, "if I inform you, that I can listen to no allusions disrespectful either to Miss Shafton, or her father, whose character indeed stands far above attack, since his truly christian virtues are written in the hearts of all who knew him; but, more especially, in those of the poor, to whom he was a father.

Dr. Squeezetithe felt ready to suffocate; but

he began to perceive, that the dignitary of the church was cutting rather a contemptible figure; and he endeavoured to repress his anger and mortification.

De Courcy continued. "Neither, permit me to say, do I perceive any thing extraordinary in Miss Shafton's having chosen the friend of her youth, as well as of her beloved father, to perform the marriage ceremony. And, allow me to say, without intending the least offence to yourself, that I quite approve of her choice, Mr. Strickland having, in every way, proved himself worthy of my esteem."

"Of course, it entirely depends upon your lordship's pleasure: I, certainly, consider it an infringement on my own particular duty; but—"

"I must again repeat, Dr. Squeezetithe, that no offence is intended!"

"Pray, my lord, say no more about it." And, endeavouring to look unconcerned and dignified, the Dr. withdrew.

CHAPTER XIV.

As we would not wish our readers to imagine that the last of the Monaghan's had acted without due propriety and delicacy in the whole tenour of his wooing and winning, we retard our farther progress in order to show the conscientious manner in which he effected the consent of Jessy to put up the banns.

Imagine Jessy sitting on a rustic seat, in a sequestered and shady dell at Meadlands, waiting the arrival of Larry, who had, in a very unusual and marked manner, requested an interview. The poor girl was trembling with a thousand conflicting emotions. Larry had completely won her heart; his handsome per-

son, good nature, and, above all, his astonishing and, to her, very often incomprehensible eloquence, had carried all before them. Still, he had never put the important question, will you become Mrs. Monaghan? The solemnity of his recent manner, when requesting the present meeting, had rather alarmed her. It had suggested uncomfortable doubts. She was uneasy. It was true that she had multitudinous memories to calm her fears, and to give hope the ascendancy in the horizon of her destiny, but—but yet she was uneasy.

Advancing, with slow and measured footsteps, as if engaged to attend a funeral, the "last rimnint of the Monaghans" made his appearance. His countenance was pale, his lips were closely set, as if to prevent their quivering, and his eyes seemed passively avoiding the recognition of every surrounding object. It was evident that he was moved; and it was equally apparent that he wished it to be thought that he was moved. His present behaviour, however, might

have some remote connexion with patriotism, or rather the desire of showing off the beautiful peculiarities of feeling, and deliberate delicacy, which he held as marked characteristics of his countrymen; but, certainly, it was uninfluenced by apprehension.

He placed himself before his charmer; gazed, for a protracted period, on her face; sighed once—and only once; then, going through the *et ceteras* of the commencement of an important scene, he began in a plaintive and resigned voice:—

"I suppose you've been tould, Jessy, that the masther an' Miss Grace are goin' a marryin'."

Jessy blushed, as much from the effect of his explanatory glance, as from the idea which his question suggested.

"I suppose," reiterated Larry, "you've been tould that the masther an' Miss Grace are goin' a marryin'; an' I suppose that you know, for you ought to know, that the terms of my engagement with his lordship require me to folly

his example; God help me!" He paused for a reply.

Jessy, at a loss for an answer, at last replied:

"No, indeed, Larry, I didn't know that!"

"No, 'cause it aint usual in these parts; but in the continted island that owns me, the idintification of parson, property an' conduct is all regulated by the will o' the masther. Consiquintly, the sarvint must marry whin his masther does,—or quit! Are ye listenin' to me, Jessy?—or quit! You ought to know the force o' that. Now then, I should be glad to know what it is I've done to you, that your'e a-going' to lose me my sityation?"

"I lose you your situation?" cried poor Jessy, in great astonishment, "indeed, indeed, Larry, I never thought nor wished any such a thing. I wouldn't hurt a hair of your head, God knows!" and the tears stood in her eyes.

"I don't think you would willingly, Jessy; but you're a doin' of it surriptitiously, as one may say. Though you don't seem to be a doin' it, yet you're a bringin' on it about wicked fast.

May the Lord lade you to a since o' the mischief, before it's ruined I am!"

"What do you mean, Larry? what, what am I doing that causes you either pain or trouble? Tell me, only tell me, and I'll convince you very soon how glad I should be to give you pleasure."

"It can't be done, it's unpossible—without a great sacrifice, Jessy," and he looked miserable.

"What sacrifice? what is the great sacrifice?" anxiously asked Jessy. "If it's any thing I can do, no matter how it hurts myself, be assured I'll do it!" and her eyes were now swimming with tears.

"The Lord bless and cherish you!" cried Larry fervently. "And is it to benefit myself that I'd be, while causin' one pang to that affictionate an' inimitable little heart o' yours? No, Jessy, when I give intertainment to such a thought as that, may the Saints renounce me, an' all good Christians spluther whin spakin' o' me! But, if it could, in a way, be conductive to your own pace an' my untowld glory, to privint

this disgrace that's a hangin' above me—if our ways o' thinkin' were peculiar to ourselves, I say, why, I'd go down upon my two bent knees, an' fall airnestly blessin' the saints for it! I wondher," he continued, taking a satisfactory survey of himself, "what's the matther with me? is there any botchin in my manifacture, that tinds to turn her aginst havin' o' me? But, I see it aint to be!"

"And why not, Larry?"

"Ay, an' why not? Sure, I've asked myself the question, iver since the light o' your flinty eye sint a spark into this tinder-box of a heart o' mine. Since the refulgint minit whin my lord first dispatched me with letthers an' posies to the docther an' Miss Grace, God rest their sowls! An' sure my prayers have been strangely throubled iver since; and, whin I'm inthercadin' with the vargin, glory be to her! sure there's a vision of another vargin, God bless her! a-staling about me, an' botherin' me with the lovely lassitude of its looks; an' my tongue goes a confusin' the ideas my head sinds it,

until r'ally the saints don't know well what I'd be afther askin' of 'em."

"I don't understand you, Larry," replied Jessy, looking innocently into his face.

"Sure, I didn't say you did, my light an' solar lamp o' life, shinin' at a small expinse, an' a surpassin' brilliancy before me! I knew you wouldn't understand me, I ain't aisy to be understood, I don't always understand myself. The rudder o' consciousness is in the keepin o' Cupid, an' a murtherin' unsteady steersman he makes. But, Jessy, as far as I can collect my thoughts, it's a dyin' for you I am! There, jewel, the murdher's out!" and down he went on his knees.

The poor girl, overpowered by emotion, and a sudden rush of delightful sensations, on beholding him, whom she truly and tenderly loved, soliciting his happiness at her hands, burst into a flood of hysteric tears that told her joy more eloquently than the most expressive words. She must have fallen to the ground, had not Larry, with the nimbleness compatible

with the velocity of his ideas, jumped to her side, and made his bosom a pedestal of support for her.

"There, then," he soothingly exclaimed, "there, then, light o' my sowl, an' guardian o' my earthly coorse, issince of all that's desirable in natur, lay your darlin' head there; an' don't be afeard aither, for there aint no thorns of envy, hathred, malice or all uncharitableness, to hurt or discompose ye; but it's glowin' for ye, pantin' for ye, an' all ready accoutred for ye to snuggle ye from the inclimincy o' the world's weather!—There, by the extrame purity o' that kiss, it is!" and he saluted her cheek in a fashion to shame a magnate of the land. "An' now, my dewy lily, stay asy while I tell you how you can prevint this horrible calamity from a ruinin' o' me. I tould you, you know, that the Irish are ingaged to live, love, an' die by their masthers, an' to folly 'em resolutely in every exthravaganza. It aint written it's thrue, but it's all the more bindin' for that emission. An' so, seein' that the masther is about to

make Miss Grace his lady—there, keep your head down, do, you'd betther—why, to save me out of this disgrace, you must endeavour to overcome your wakeness, and—and—and—yerra bother it, what ails this tongue o' mine? the short an' the long of it is, Jessy, my own darlin', an' tinderly beloved crathur, you must be—Misthress Monaghan! There, thank God, that matter is mintioned, no matther what comes of it. An' will ye Jessy? will ye thrust in my keepin' the peace of your bussum? will you augmint the glory of my life an' position in society, by sharin' it with me, an' keepin' the name o' Monaghan from wasting out of the heraldry? Say but a word Jessy, a little doony word, or pinch me, or h'ave a sigh (for sighs are fittin'), or give me a little nudge;—any of 'em, altogether or separate, will be sufficient to an obsarvin' adorer."

Here, a low soft sigh of Jessy's transported him into the seventh heaven.

"God bless you for that, my pearl of purity! An' now," he shouted, with a sudden and

on the grave of the last M
'em 'ill do it, I say agin,
childer is a starin' him in
every mother's son of
Harroo, an' haroo agin!"
of Madeira that trembled
rounding branches were st
of his gesticulation. In the
he struck up.—

"Oh, Jessy, I love
My sweet little
An' mane for to m
Sweet Misthress
Your amiable man
And airnest devo
Have caused me to
Myself with this

A hut in the boree
I've furnished fo
There's every thing
And every thing
And, as marriage b
Year following y

And I've purchased a cow,
  To give butther an' crame,
An' 'tis you will look killin'
  A milking the same!

The pig is a crathur
  So aisy to pl'ase,
That he'll ate any thing
  With comparative ase:
And the sheep are so simple,
  They'll feed on the lawn
With the utmost composure,
  From evenin' till dawn.

For myself, since I'm counting
  The whole livin' stock,
I'm as tame as a dove,
  And as thrue as a rock!
As for dhrinkin', I've taken
  The oath for a year,
So, on that head, my darlin',
  You've nothin' to fear!

My talents are various,
  And suitable too;---
I can dig, plough and harrow,
  Make brogues, bake and brew;
An' I'm out and out knowin',
  In all that relates
To bottoming saucepans,
  An' soldering plates.

I'm tinder, an' ganial,
  And loveable very:---
Oh! life will be Heaven
  Along with your Larry.
Without any turmoil,
  Or bother or strife;
Intinsely devoting
  Myself to my wife.

So blessed with your husband,
  So proud of your slobs, love,
Your heart will be happy
  As long as it throbs, love;
And, when our rethrate
  From this world begins, love,
We'll jist slip into Heaven
  Like two lovin' twins, love.
Oh, Jessy, &c."

"Harroo! I'm the happiest man o' my size in all Europe!"

There now remains only to be told that Falkland, observing the affectionate attachment between Lucy and Grace, and desirous of adding to the happiness of both, agreed with de Courcy for the purchase of Meadlands.

The same day, saw the two lovely and happy brides united. The merry bells pealed forth from the village church, and the joyful tenantry were, according to the good old fashionable times, feasted and entertained. Dr. Squeeze-tithe, though superceded in his office, received so ample a fee on the occasion, that his ire was propitiated, and he was heard to say that "he partly approved of Miss Shafton's feeling, in choosing her old friend to perform the ceremony."

Must it, to the horror of all fashionables, be confessed, that Lady de Courcy did not immediately step into a carriage-and-four, and again fly from her home on a foreign tour. Yes, for both herself and the Earl were too fondly attached

to the scene, in which their spring of love had been spent, to wish to desert them. The bride remained quietly at home, and passed the honey moon, (if there were any period in her long and happy hereafter that deserved not the same term, supposing it to signify a moon of happiness) amidst her adoring tenantry, whose peace and comfort she delighted to promote and to witness.

Mrs. Miles Stanhope passed her time alternately with her two young friends; sometimes persuading them to pass the season in her still beloved London.

Though quite beyond the limits of a fashionable novel, we cannot help indulging our old fashioned propensity of looking beyond the wedding-day, and informing our readers that, about a twelvemonth after the marriage of our friends, Lady de Courcy presented her lord with a son; and that, a few months afterwards, Mrs. Falkland gave birth to a daughter; which events caused a general prophesy among the village gossips, that the houses of de Courcy and Falkland would hereafter be united.

Larry, in guerdon of his faithful attachment and long services, received from his master the gift of a comfortable and profitable farm; whilst Falkland insisted upon doing his part, by bestowing a plentiful stock to begin with. Here settled happily, he soon distanced his generous patrons, in his practical contempt for Mr. Malthus; for before the succeeding autumn had browned the berry and the leaf, two of the thirteen cradles were brought into simultaneous, or, as Larry would say, 'surirptitious' requisition; the young Monaghans making their appearance two at a time in regular annual progression; rendering it, to Larry's great relief, no easy matter,—or, rather, as unlikely as not being at all probable, for one of the Carthy's or Sweeny's to dance upon the berrin-place of the last of the Monaghan's.

THE END.

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